Week ending Jan. 30 1960

JOHN BULL

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FIVEPENCE

UNBORN—YET ALREADY A CRIMINAL

The next Prime Minister?

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The Cover

"WON'T be a minute," said Mother, and skipped gaily inside. That was twenty weary minutes ago. Now she's fallen at last—for a dress made all the prettier by its price tag. But no wonder winter sales put Father on edge: last year she landed him with a dozen shirts and ties at give-away prices—and in give-away styles, too. "Of course, he can always hit back," says artist Batchelor, "by making a few sensational reductions himself—starting with her dress allowance"

Free Speech

JOHN BULL pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech." Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to our Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post and in our feature "We Advise."

Thoroughly Schooled

THERE'S only one way to cut the slaughter on the roads—send those responsible back to school.

Southend motorists can get what must be the most advanced driving tuition in the country for a few shillings because it is provided by the local police.

Similar schools should be set up everywhere — and motorists found guilty of dangerous or careless driving compelled to attend them.—MRS. M. S., Southend, Essex.

"Our scheme is in its third year," say Southend police. "Before taking a tough practical test, pupils must pass a three-hour written examination on motoring laws and driving technique. So high is the standard that of four hundred pupils only twenty have so far passed their finals."

Post-hastened

Why can't we have square pillar boxes with letter-openings on each side and avoid the confusion in busy towns when several people try to post letters at once?—G. BURTON, Unwin Street, Bradely, Stoke-on-Trent.

"We've considered this," says the G.P.O., "but fear that it would cause accidents through people being tempted to step off the kerb or stand in the gutter."

Favoured Southerners

During the summer my wife and I gave up the idea of taking a British Railways long-day excursion from Stoke-on-Trent to Paris, partly because of the trouble and expense of obtaining passports. We now find that it is possible to take the same excursion from London, but without passports.

British Railways tell us that at the moment the Home Office will not agree to "no passport" arrangements being applied to passengers booking from anywhere but London and the South Coast ports.

It's about time this stupid law was altered to give equal facilities to people in Stoke, the Midlands and the North.—S. R. L., Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire.

"This is a limited concession agreed with the French authorities," says the Home Office. "So far it has not been possible to extend it."

Reluctant Censor

I would like to enter for JOHN BULL'S crossword puzzle competitions but hesitate to do so because it means cutting out part of a story or article—and I hand my copies on to people who would not otherwise see them.—MRS. A. J. PRENTICE, Bordriggs, Windermere.

Crossword puzzle entries will be accepted if copied out on a separate sheet of paper.

Per Pro Blushes

Alan Lloyd's article on blushing (JOHN BULL, December 19) reminds me of the blushes I have experienced—on behalf of other people.

I have blushed at the discomfiture of a companion, at a *faux pas* of a fellow guest, at a colleague's too casual boasting—and once on behalf of an elderly lady who mentioned the name of her obvious "crush."

Of course, I have blushed for my own lies and mistakes and fears. But why should those of other people come home to roost on my cheeks?

Please omit my full name and address. Somebody might mention this letter to me and I should then blush for their boorishness.—MRS. F. H., Campbeltown, Argyllshire.

Patient

I have just been told that true character is reflected in the way in which one emerges from an anaesthetic. After a recent operation, I understand that while other

patients cried and were extremely noisy I shed not a tear and was, in fact, a calm and perfect patient.

Perhaps, after all, I can now take credit for this.—MRS. M. MAXWELL, Rosewood Park, Belfast 6.

"A little credit, but not much," says a doctor. "Well-balanced people are inclined to behave well, it is true. But if the anaesthetic has been really deep one's behaviour is often a genuine throw-back—and you couldn't blame a small child for crying, could you?"

Working It Out

My answer to the teenage and other social problems would be to set up citizen's workshops in various districts where one could do a bit of cabinet making, model engineering, photography, handicrafts, car repairing, etc., without having to spend money on costly equipment.

These combined social and amenities centres would include stores for selling the necessary materials and hiring out tools—and would offer people far more scope for their leisure activities than the usual kitchen table or bottom-of-the-garden workshed.—CPL. J. E. SMITH, R.A.F. Gütersloh, Germany.

Suicidal Selling

How honest dare a shopkeeper be without ruining his business? In Spain traders directed me to their rivals. A butcher whose battered sausages I examined would say: "But there are much better sausages at the shop up the street," thereby losing a sale.

And a sad little man in a café apologized because the red wine he sold us "is not good tonight because I have watered it down." I agreed, and imagined what rancour this would have caused in an English pub.

But back in England I found the maddest honesty of all. "Quite impossible," said a grocer. "I can't sell you a tin of beans. It's against the law."

Needless to say it was a Sunday. Maybe the English are the daftest of the lot.—BARRIE FRASER, Lower Market Street, Hove, Sussex.

Black Whiting

The man who sold margarine for a shilling a box as muscle-salve ("Free Speech," January 2) reminds me of a man in Newcastle-on-Tyne market several years ago who sold "black toothpowder" for sixpence a box.

He was demonstrating on a boy from the crowd and doing a brisk trade. When I accused him of selling soot he readily admitted it.—J. H. WARDLE, Killingworth Road, Forest Hall, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

"Soot would work as well as any other abrasive," says a dentist, "although most people would prefer salt. I use toothpaste myself. . . ."

Hark, Hark Lark

Many people share Mrs. Constance Green's inability to recognize a recording of her own voice ("Free Speech," December 12). But there is a way of hearing your own voice even if you have no tape recorder.

Take a book in your right hand and press it gently, perpendicularly, against your head just in front of the right ear. Place another in front of your left ear. Then speak or sing.

This idea is not new. I used it years ago in voice training. It

helps to detect faults—particularly in those who let their voices wallow in the throat.—W. H. MARSHALL, Grantown-on-Spey, Morayshire.

Death Comes Home

We have a Highway Code, so why not a Household Code? Over 7,500 people die each year because of accidents in the place where they should be most safe.

It could tell us what and what not to do with gas, electricity, radio and television; offer first-aid hints, etc.—A. RACE, Herries Road, Sheffield 5.

"Our thirty-two page booklet 'Accidents in the home' covers these points," says the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, 52 Gosvenor Gardens, London, S.W.1. "Anybody who sends us sixpence in stamps can have one post free."

Born To Be Adored

I overheard the following exchange between two young lads:

"My favourite film-star is John Wayne. He's a real tough guy."

"Pooh!" said the elder one (all of nine). "Mine is Brigitte Bardot."

"Why?" asked the younger—and I waited with dreadful anticipation.

"'Cos," was the reply, "her birthday is the same as mine."—R. STARLING, Goose Lane, Sutton, Norfolk.

Marrying Meriel would make him the happiest man in the world. But she was too kind-hearted to say yes

THE LOST SHEEP

by JOHN DAVIES

TERRIBLE it is, I tell you, the way some women will scheme to catch a man. Not only a man for themselves either. Give them half a chance of helping some other female that's having a bit of trouble that way—they can't resist it.

Clever they are, too, at this matchmaking game. Terrible clever, the woman I have in mind at the moment. Gives me cold shudders down my back, it does, just to think of it.

Look at the way she fixed up little Mrs. Hughes, down at the Schooner.

A NICE little woman, Mrs. Hughes. A sad affair that, too, the way she was left a widow almost as soon as she and her husband had taken over the pub. They hadn't been at the Schooner five minutes when the poor chap dropped dead. Heart, the doctor said.

Swansea people, they were, before they came here to Cardiff. And everybody thought Mrs. Hughes would go back to Swansea after her sad loss. They never expected for a moment that she would stay on and run the pub all alone; not a rough old pub like the Schooner, right down there by the docks.

She did stay, though, and soon made a wonderful change in the old place too. . . .

Hold on, though. I'm getting a bit ahead of myself, seeing that I didn't know anything about all this at the time. I'd only been in the Schooner once in my life, and that was years ago. A dreary old beer slops sort of a dump, it had seemed to me, not my idea of a nice pub at all.

IT was Blodwen's brother Ianto who first told us what was happening down there, one day when he came up home to us for dinner. Steward on a ship Ianto was, a wreck of an old tramp that did a run out of Cardiff and up the English Channel, calling at French and Dutch ports as far as Rotterdam. Ianto said the food on board that old thing was terrible. He didn't do much better when he was ashore either, being a bachelor, so now and again he came up to us to get a bit of Blodwen's good grub under his belt.

Being on a ship, Ianto did most of his drinking down round the docks, so he knew all about the changes at the Schooner.

"Gloomy old hole," I said. "Bad enough to make anybody want to sign the pledge."

"Pity you don't make it your local for a bit, then," Blodwen said.

Ianto speared a bit of Blodwen's best crackling and popped it in his mouth.

"Gloomy?" he said. "True that, once, I grant you, but not any more. Not now Meriel's running it."

"Meriel?" Blodwen said.

"Mrs. Hughes, I mean," Ianto said. And he went red in the face.

Ianto, the old devil—was blushing.

"A pretty name, that," Blodwen said. "A pretty woman, is she, Ianto?"

"Pretty?" Ianto said, getting redder than ever. "I don't know. . . ."

Blodwen laughed. "You do," she said. "Soft on her, you are, I reckon." She turned to me. "Fancy that—our Ianto soft on a woman at last!"

"Shut up, silly," I said. "Come on, then, Ianto. Tell us what she's been doing down there."

Ianto told us. According to him, this Mrs. Hughes had turned the old Schooner into a different place. She'd redecorated it, and got a piano, a real nice one, not one of the usual old pub things. There was a different atmosphere altogether in the place too, and a different class of customer from the old days, when it was all drunks and fights down there. Men took their wives and sweethearts and you could have a wonderful evening there, Ianto told us. If you chose the right night of the week, you could hear some of the best hymn-singing in Wales.

"Hymns?" I said to Blodwen afterwards. "Down in an old dock pub like that?"

Blodwen gave me a look. "Better go down and see what it's all about."

"Do that, I will," I said. "I——"

Blodwen gave me another look. "Do that, *we* will," she said. "I want to see this wonderful little woman."

So we went, the very next evening after supper.

WHAT Ianto had told us was true, too. The Schooner was as different as could be from the place I remembered—all nicely done up, cosy and bright and welcoming, with ships' lamps and binnacles and other bits of nice polished brass on the walls, and even flowers on the tables. There were a lot of people there too, although it was a Tuesday night, and cold and raining as well.

The real difference, though, didn't have anything to do with the way the old pub had been refurbished. Little Mrs. Hughes, it was, that gave the place its real warmth and welcome. She was the brightest, cosiest, most welcoming part of it all, and such a nice, good-hearted woman that it did you good just to be in the same room with her.

Attractive she was too, with her pretty dark hair and neat little figure that was plump in exactly the right places. Easy enough to see why anyone might be a bit soft on her.

"And Ianto's not the only one," Blodwen whispered to me after we'd been there that evening only a little while.

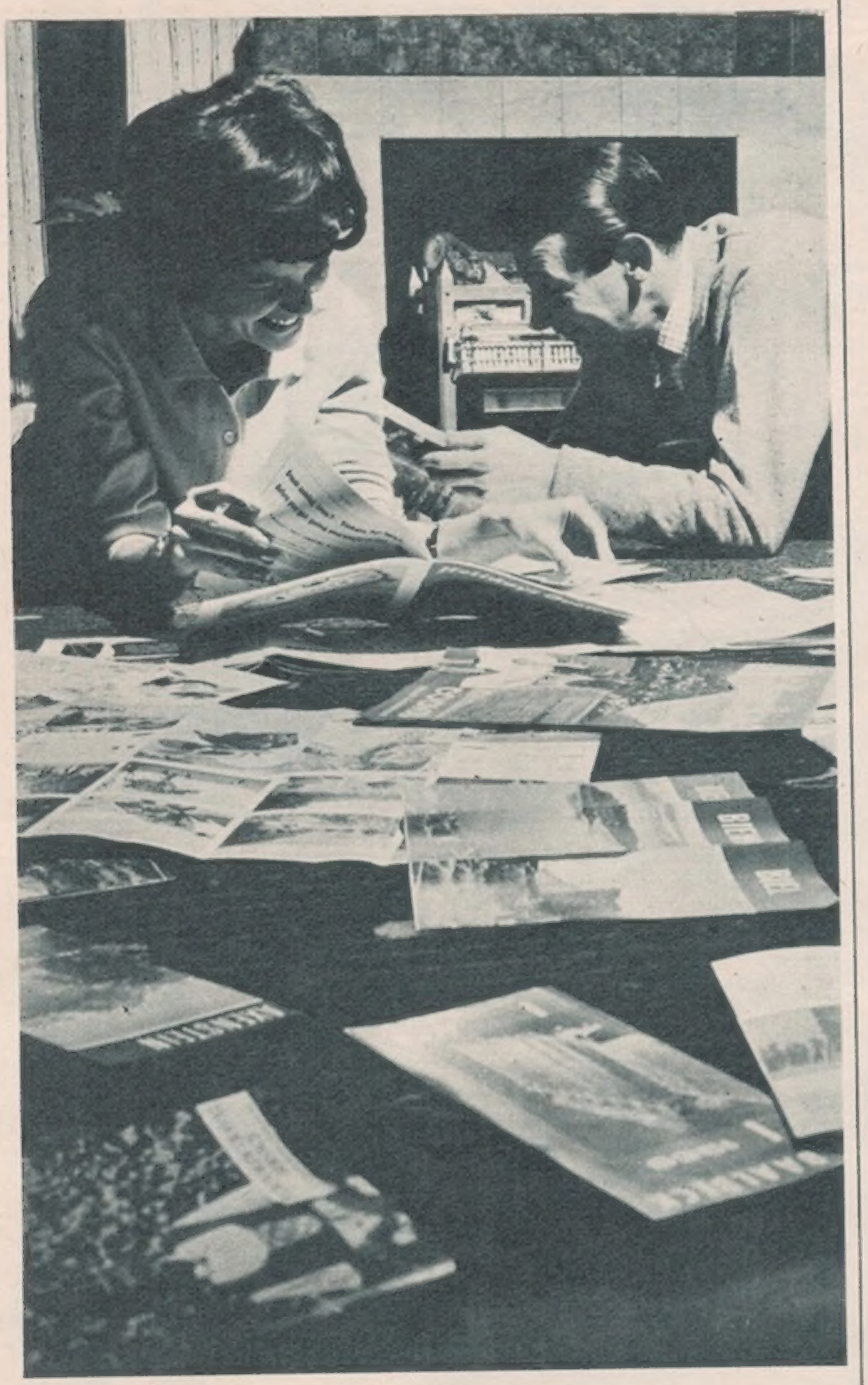
SHE was right. Ianto was off on his ship, but there was another chap who looked as though he'd got it pretty bad. A tall streak of a chap in uniform. It was customs uniform, and he looked very well in it. A very good-looking man he was, except for the soppy look on his face as he leaned on the bar and made sheep's eyes at Mrs. Hughes.

That was the first time Blodwen and I went to the Schooner, and it wasn't by any means the last. We enjoyed ourselves so much that first evening that we soon got into the habit of strolling down there regularly a couple of times a week.

We soon got to know little Mrs. Hughes pretty well and the better we knew her, the better we liked her. She was a wonderful

Who would have thought a woman could make such a success of a pub? No wonder Ianto was enraptured

ILLUSTRATED BY HESELTINE



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The lost sheep

continued from page 4

little woman, that, as Ianto had said—and not only because of what she'd done to the old pub. She'd also started working a few small miracles in the district around.

It's a rough old part of the town down there by the docks, with a lot of poor and unlucky people in it, and a lot more no better than they should be. A slum area, you might call it, with a sort of hopelessness about it.

But it wasn't quite so hopeless now Mrs. Hughes had come to live in it. A heart of pure gold, that woman had. She'd only got to hear of somebody who needed a bit of help or comfort, and she hurried to do what she could, whether it was slipping across a pound note where it was badly needed, or some poor lonely soul to be chatted with.

A particular feeling, she had, for the lost sheep, too, for the girls who had babies when they shouldn't, or the poor old dears who tried to snitch a quarter of tea when they hadn't the money to buy it, and got pinched for it. She helped them all. Very fond, she was, of that saying about the one that had gone astray being more important than all the others that hadn't.

"The nicest woman I've ever met," Blodwen said one night when we were strolling home. "Too nice, really."

"A nice little armful, she'd be," I said.

Blodwen snorted. "Stop that straight away you can, Tom Griffiths. You've got the only nice little armful you're ever going to have, my lad, right here."

"Suits me, that," I said.

It did, too. Twenty years I'd been married to my old Blod, and never regretted a moment of it. Or if I ever did, I'd only got to think of what I might have married instead.

Hilda Price, her name was then—it was Pritchard after she got married—and she was Blodwen's best friend in those old days long ago. She was a nice enough bit of stuff at the time, to look at anyway, but she's changed a lot since then. A scrawny, shrieking old harridan, she's turned into, leads poor old Dai Pritchard a devil of a life, and him as nice a chap as you could wish to meet.

"Too good-hearted by half, she is," Blodwen said. "Wears herself out, with all she does. Tired out, she looks, sometimes. And lonely too. If you ask me, she could do with a bit of help and comfort herself."

"Ought to get married again, I suppose you mean?" I said. "Well, what's stopping her, then? Got two of them with their tongues hanging out."

"That's the trouble," Blodwen said, "—there's two of them. They've both got it bad, and she knows that as well as anybody. And she can't make up her mind to choose either of them because it would hurt the other one."

My old Blodwen seemed to be right as usual. Both Ianto and the Customs man—Will Hopkin, his name was—were there in the Schooner as often as they could manage it, looking lovesick and soppy at little Mrs. Hughes. And she fluttered between them. She seemed to like Ianto best, but that didn't solve the problem. She simply couldn't harden her heart enough against the one to give it to the other.

It got more and more obvious as time went on that she preferred Ianto. That wasn't surprising either—or at any rate that was the way Blodwen and I felt about it, because we didn't like Hopkin the Customs at all. He was big and handsome enough, especially in his uniform, but he had a thin, mean mouth, and he didn't look you in the eye when he spoke. A bit shifty and underhand, he seemed to us. Cunning. And it was cunning the way he always managed to seem a bit lonely and pathetic, and always had some ailment or other. That was a sure way to touch Mrs. Hughes's heart, as he well knew.

In the end it began to look as though the lucky man would be the one that stayed the course longest, Hopkin the Customs or our Ianto.

"Hope it's Ianto," Blodwen said. "I really do. The poor old chap needs a wife and a bit of comfort. He'd make her a good husband too. He's nice, our Ianto, even if he is a silly old thing." She sighed. "If only he was a bit more romantic. If only he'd do something that would sweep her off her feet!"

"Romantic—Ianto?" I said. "Don't be daft."

And indeed, far from sweeping little Mrs. Hughes off her feet, it soon began to look as though Ianto was going to chuck his hand in, and let us down and himself too. The trouble was, he was away on his ship such a lot, while old Hopkin was there in the pub almost every night.

He got so depressed that in the end he lost heart altogether. He came up to us one night desperate about it.

"Fed up, I am," he said. "Can't go on like this any longer."

I said, "Well, what are you going to do about it, then?"

"Go away," Ianto said. He looked miserable enough to cry. "Take a ship out of Liverpool or somewhere. Get a bit of peace then."

"Why don't you ask her to marry you?" Blodwen said. "Put it to her straight, in so many words."

"Done that, I have, already," Ianto said. He shook his head. "She said she couldn't make up her mind."

"Then why don't you *do* something to make her make up her mind?" Blodwen said.

Ianto just looked at her miserably. "Do what?" he asked. He shook his head again. "No—hopeless it is, I tell you. Clear out is all I can do."

Quite set on it, he was. We spent a lot of time that evening trying to argue him out of it, but it wasn't any good. And, when he left to go back to his ship, it seemed to me that that was the end of that. . . .

But then Ianto did his last trip on his old ship. And Hopkin the Customs found the diamond ring. And a lot of other things happened very quickly.

Bought the ring in Rotterdam, old Ianto did, where you can get such things cheap. Spent pretty well all the money he had in the world on it too—fifty pounds—so it was a very nice ring indeed, worth a lot more in this country when the duty had been paid on it.

Ianto had no intention of paying duty on it. He brought it ashore in a little box in his pocket, when he got back to Cardiff, and didn't say anything to anybody.

And then, suddenly, our Ianto was in a lot of trouble. He was just coming out through the dock gates at the end of that trip when cunning old humbug Hopkin nabbed him and searched him and found the ring.

In a proper mess, poor old Ianto was then. Lost his ship over it. And a nice old fine he got in court.

He wasn't really poor old Ianto, though. Because little Mrs. Hughes was really upset at his sufferings. She set herself to comfort him, and did such a good job at it that in no time at all they were married and our old Ianto was behind the bar of the Schooner. Full-time, because he decided not to go to sea any more.

Of course it was easy enough, afterwards, to understand how it had happened. When he was caught, old Ianto became a lost sheep, a soul to be saved. Little Mrs. Hughes couldn't resist that. And he'd done it for her, too. She couldn't resist that either. So Ianto was the one for her, and old Will Hopkin was out of it.

Fishy, though, it all seemed to me, first because it almost looked as though Ianto had bought the ring and got caught with it deliberately, knowing what would happen then, and he wasn't clever enough for that. And second because his getting caught was plainly a put-up job. Switched duties with

continued on page 27

'Happy' is the man who is going up —FAST

by WILFRED GREATOREX

Edward Heath wielded the best whip in the House. Now he's relying on a smile that could turn him into a prime minister

NOBODY would have blamed Edward "Happy" Heath if he had been anything but radiant. With a series of wildcat strikes coinciding with his first week as Her Majesty's Minister of Labour, he had good cause for displeasure.

As he breezed into the ministry conference room in St. James's Square, however, his morning-fresh face was aglow. He beamed a confident greeting all round, looked remarkably like someone who had never had it so good, and briskly got down to business as chairman of the powerful National Joint Advisory Council, which advises the government on labour matters.

Charmer

Below, to his right, were nine employers' men, and to his left, thirteen trade union leaders, including Sir Tom O'Brien. Heath fixed O'Brien with a benevolent grin and consoled him on the loss of his Labour seat at the election. "It wasn't tongue in cheek, either," says one of those present. "Heath is a rare charmer who rarely misses a chance to say the nicest things."

If a sunny disposition counts for anything in the hard world of industry, Edward Richard George Heath, otherwise known as "Happy," "Smiler" and "Mac's Private Eye," can hardly fail to make a hit as Minister of Labour.

At Westminster, the ex-grammar school boy from the Kent coast excites more personal speculation than most of his more famous Cabinet colleagues put together. A forty-three year old early-developer, he is best known for the way he held the Parliamentary Tories together through the crises of the last Parliament, notably Suez.

"But for Ted," recalls one grateful Tory M.P., "there's no knowing what might have happened."

Genius

Heath is now on trial. Hailed as a political genius, tipped as a future prime minister, respected for his miracles of back-room welding and keenly watched because of his closeness to Macmillan, he has still to prove that he has the stature, the experience, even the cleverness, to run the Ministry of Labour.

He knows the size of the job.

At a time of industrial expansion and technical advances, with strikes the order of the day, his powers for keeping management and labour sweet towards each other are severely limited. Yet he will certainly be judged on whether he can keep peace in industry.

'Lovely'

As Heath moved between the House of Commons and the ministry, he bore no trace of worry. He listened long and hard to his advisers. He went to see the shipbuilding recession at first hand.

Also, he put his charm to work. "Everyone was slightly bowled over at first," says one official, "especially the lady civil servants. One of them said: 'Isn't he lovely?'" Senior male officials

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UNBORN—YET ALREADY A CRIMINAL

The secrets

What makes us go wrong—heredity or upbringing? Astonishing new experiments with one of nature's most puzzling phenomena are helping an astute German criminologist to find the answer

PROFESSOR JOHANNES LANGE, a criminologist at Munich University, wanted to know what made men take to crime—was it born in them, or was it due to their experiences in life?

To help him find out he was given permission to investigate all the prisoners in Bavaria. But how was he going to do it?

It would be useless to ask them if they had become criminals through hunger, greed, or keeping bad company. Equally useless to ask if any of their family had been in jail.

Lange decided to apply what is now known as the twin method.

There are two types of twins. In one-egg twins, only one male cell and one female cell are involved.

For a time, the egg develops in the womb as if only one child were being produced.

Then, for some reason we do not know, it splits and two separate children develop side by side.

Start life alike

Because they start life as one they inherit exactly the same qualities. They are of the same sex and are very much alike both mentally and physically. Usually, they are similar enough to cause confusion.

Naturally, they do differ. But the differences do not come from their ancestors.

They are due to the things that happen to them both in the womb and in the outside world after their birth —from disease to a punch on the nose, from lack of food to failure in an examination.

Two-egg twins are different. They have started life as two separate eggs fertilized by two separate male cells—two children who happened to be in the womb at the same time. At no stage have they been one.

They may be brothers, or sisters, or one brother and one sister. They *may* inherit similar qualities—perhaps the same colour hair—but they can never inherit *exactly* the same qualities.

The differences between two-egg twins are just as likely to be due to heredity as to their experiences.

Trouble in the past

It was this difference between the two types of twins which Lange decided to make use of. He found that thirty prisoners belonged to pairs of twins: thirteen of them one-egg, the rest two-egg.

Lange traced the life-history of the twins who were *not* in prison—the prisoners' opposite numbers—to discover if they had been in trouble in the past.

Of the one-egg group, *ten* had been in jail. But of the two-egg twins, in only two cases had both fallen foul of the law.

Each pair of the two-egg twins had led as nearly identical lives as is possible for separate human beings. Yet they rarely both became criminals.

The one-egg twins had led similar lives. But they had also inherited exactly the same qualities from their ancestors.

Since ten of the thirteen pairs had both been in jail, it seemed likely that some of these qualities made them criminals.

Rarely great men

"We must admit," concluded Lange, "that as far as the causes of crime are concerned, inborn tendencies play a preponderant part."

Twins rarely become great men, either separately or in pairs, but experiments on them have helped scientists enormously. The twin method, which Lange used, is about the only way in which they can find out whether or not diseases are inherited.

They have found, for instance, that when one twin suffers from club-foot, the other does so in twenty-three per cent of one-egg twins but in only two per cent of two-egg twins. Because of this, scientists think that club-foot is inherited.

With cancer, the opposite is true. In sixty-one per cent of one-egg twins and in forty-four per cent of two-egg twins where one twin was afflicted, the other was too. This probably means that cancer is *not* inherited.

But the twin method suggests that many other physical diseases *are* inherited.

One of these is a disease in which cysts form in the kidneys. It also seems that diabetes, gall-stones and Paget's Disease, in which the bones become softened and bend in old age, are at least partly inherited.

Striking discovery

Doctors have found a way of transplanting kidneys from one twin to another—until recently regarded as impossible. But six out of seven recent operations were successful.

By twin method, scientists have made striking discoveries about mental illness. In nearly nine-tenths of the one-egg twins where one was feeble-minded, so was the other.

This happened in only half the number of two-egg twins.

It seems then that feeble-mindedness is largely inherited.

The twin method seems to have shown conclusively that mongolism is inherited.

Altogether, 162 pairs of twins in which one or both are mongols have been investigated. In all the twenty-five pairs of one-egg twins, both were mongols; in all but two of the 137 two-egg pairs, one partner only.

The twin method strongly suggests that other forms of mental disease are also inherited.

In schizophrenia, sixty-seven per cent of the one-egg pairs were both affected. But with the two-egg pairs, there was not a single case where both were affected.

Manic-depressive insanity also seems to be inherited.

Both went deaf

Dr. Franz Kallmann, an American scientist, wondered whether a man's span of life was fixed at birth, and he investigated 933 pairs of ageing twins. He found that the two-egg twins invariably died more than three months apart. But many of the one-egg pairs died within this period.

Often, only a few days separated the twins' deaths.

Kallmann came across a pair of female twins, one of whom had married a farmer and lived in the country. The other had remained a spinster and had taken up dressmaking.

Yet they both went deaf and blind in the same month and had strokes on the same day.

Barring accidents, it seems likely that our life-span—as well as some of our illnesses—may be fixed at birth.

THE END

Most twins, like the Croft girls now appearing with the Crazy Gang in London, make a successful go of life. Others sometimes take to crime. But can they really help it?

revealed by twins

by Dr. BASIL DAWLISH

Crocodile Trader · 3

by Bill Sutherland

as told to Rory Macaulay

FLOOD and the Zambesi drowns a fortune

A HALF-MOON rode high, casting grotesque shadows from the trees. Our tent, pitched in jungle beside a Rhodesian lake on a January night three years ago, was slap-bang in the centre of a hippo path.

Graham Hall, my fellow-Rhodesian and companion crocodile hunter, was the first to feel that the brutes were becoming too familiar. Going to the door, he let off a shot into the night—normally an unfailing method of getting rid of any unusually bold hippo.

"That'll quieten them down," he said, and returned to bed.

Although this was by no means the first occasion on which we had to fire a warning shot, up till now the hippo had always taken the hint, just as we, ready to meet them half-way, would turn out our light and go to sleep, when hippo came close in snorting disapproval of midnight lights. That had been the position, but now, no sooner had Graham lain down, than things began to happen.

A huge body crashed through the undergrowth directly towards us. We tried to scramble to our feet, but I had hardly reached my knees before I saw Graham enveloped in tent and, next moment, my head was also enshrouded in canvas.

The poles clattered down upon our heads and the ropes entwined themselves around us, but still we struggled to break free. Breathing became a nightmare, and soon we were helplessly tied up.

It was then that the whole structure began to move. The scared, frenzied hippo had its legs entwined in our guy-ropes.

The tent moved faster and faster. I yelled and, at sound of my own frantic scream, stopped struggling. What was the use? The hippo was making for water.

Trussed up like rats, we were being dragged towards the crocodile-infested lake.

In those few desperate seconds I thought quicker than I had ever thought before. "Cut yourself loose," I yelled to Graham, but even as I shouted I knew that it was no good.

We were tossed about like milk in a churn and, although only seconds had passed, we must be right upon the water. Once in the water the hippo would make for a deep part and submerge. And when a hippo submerges it lies quiet so as not to disclose its whereabouts to watchers on the surface!

Chance to cut free

We still had a chance, though a slender one. The tent would be reasonably waterproof for a few minutes, and during these minutes it would cease to move.

We must cut ourselves free before water got through the canvas.

"Cut your way out, soon as we stop moving," I yelled to Graham, groping wildly for my knife. The words were hardly out of my mouth before all movement ceased.

Frenziedly I set to work, wondering why there was no water, and why it was still so easy to breathe.

Slashing two ropes which impeded movement, I grabbed a fistful of cloth but, before I could slash it across, Graham's muffled voice drifted to my ears.

"Don't be a bloody fool. He's clear of the ropes, and we're still on dry land!"

I was too relieved to feel sheepish when, after some difficulty, I was breathing fresh air again and found that we were still a matter of feet from the water's edge.

A frayed and broken guy-rope trailed in the water. For the first time in my life I found myself glad that a guy-rope was old and frayed. If it hadn't been. . . .

To a certain extent, I suppose, we'd been asking for trouble. We had no business to have camped there. It was a spot where Graham and I went at nights and weekends secretly to shoot crocodiles. Already we had collected a fine stack of skins on which our hopes rested—mine especially; I badly needed money to clear up my debts.

However, next day we went back to the Zambesi to our main camp, which was the official reason for our being in

Angrily the waters rose. . . . Now we faced the river's might — just as the gods had warned us

that part of the jungle. We were helping Arthur Jones, a zestful and enterprising American, to do what had never been heard of before. We were snaring crocodiles alive to send them off to the United States. Much as we disliked the whole idea, Jones had promised to take us to the States with him, providing the authorities let us go. The opportunity appealed to us enormously.

'Soon we all drown'

Whereas in the secret camp we were troubled by hippo, our worry in the main camp was a crocodile, the largest we'd seen. Not a night passed without it making an appearance. It was always there, waiting and watching . . . for what?

This resulted in one of our Africans, Sanganga, coming to me with an extraordinary tale of woe.

"The crocodile can mean only one thing," he said. "Nyami-Nyami, the Zambesi god, has sent it as a warning. The god now very unhappy, and very soon the river run fast and we all drown."

"You and your rising river!" roared Arthur, who was touchy on the subject of floods. They were overdue, but he refused to take the slightest notice of our warnings. Arthur said a lot more. Sanganga waited patiently until he had run out of breath, then said firmly that on the next trip to the nearest village, Mambova, he would leave us.

Tempted by Jones

Jones raged, but Sanganga was adamant.

Nightly ruby eyes showed up in the torchlight until the time came when Jones could stand it no longer. He seized a lump of meat and hurled it in the direction of the brute. Next, taking a smaller piece, he called my pet mongrel Fritz and flung it to the dog, less than ten yards from where the unblinking eyes showed.

"Crocs love dog," he said. "Fritz'll make an irresistible mouthful. Then we can nab the croc on the job."

I protested, but was told that the dog was in no more danger than Jones himself. Besides, should the brute advance upon the dog, he, Jones, with our assistance would tackle it there and then.

To my intense relief Fritz gulped the meat, glanced disdainfully towards the crocodile and retired.

Night after night this pantomime was re-enacted on similar lines, invariably with the same result.

As it turned out, none of us knew anything about the return of the crocodile until one morning we awoke to find every piece of meat gone from the snares near the camp, and many of the snares destroyed.

Some of these had been brushed aside, and a stout cable had been snapped in two.

Tell-tale noose

Never before had a cable been broken that way. It was a mute testimony to the size and strength of the reptile.

"Well, we sure gotta catch that fella before leaving," Jones went on.

Sanganga had been gone at least a week when one morning we discovered a huge crocodile in one of the last snares to be examined. I suggested it might be the sentry wallah.

"A big fella," Jones conceded. "A big fella, but not The One. Our pal's a darned sight——" The sentence was left in mid-air. "Say, Bill, take a look," he exclaimed, running forward.

I blinked, and looked again. Drawn

continued on page 28

Bill Sutherland and his fellow hunters calmed crocodiles by blindfolding them. The crocodiles were transported in wooden "coffins"

WORT and the ANGEL BOY

by ROBERT HOLMES

ILLUSTRATED BY HESELTINE

YES, said September Wort, laughing lightly, I have them eating out of my hand now. Very different from last term. Then I was—well, frankly, I was terrified of them. And the little devils knew it, of course. Took advantage. But I've discovered since then that the control of boys is all quite a simple matter of personality. . . .

Personality?

Cholmondeley minor and young Angel were the ringleaders, September Wort said, ignoring the interruption. Both strong personalities. I might as well admit that they had me beaten. By the end of last term I was a broken man. In fact, I was seriously wondering if I had it in me to be a teacher. . . .

Oh, come, September!

Yes, it sounds laughable now, doesn't it? But I had reached a state of absolute despair. The most beautiful sight I've ever seen was the back of young Angel's bullet head as it receded up the school drive at the end of term. I wept with joy, thinking that I would not see it again for a whole eight weeks.

THEN, said September Wort, I set about packing my belongings. I was spending a month of the summer vacation in Italy. But before this, in order to conserve funds, I was filling in a week or two as a leader at a boys' summer camp in the Lake District.

The camp was run by a Dr. Humdrick and it was one of those healthy places intended to foster initiative and self-reliance. Remotely situated, of course, and to while away the tedious journey I took the precaution at Euston of providing myself with reading matter. Among my purchases was a slim volume entitled, *The Book of Power*. It told one how to acquire a dominant, forceful personality.

When I finally arrived at Strumble's Halt, some five hours later, I had read this work from cover to cover. Muttering, *"Wort the Bold, Wort the Brave,"* in accordance with the book's instructions, I descended to the platform.

HALF a dozen chickens ran away squawking. They were undoubtedly afraid of me and, although they were not fully grown, the incident was gratifying.

"Wort the Mighty, Wort the Powerful," I murmured, struggling to lift my suitcase.

Strumble's Halt seemed deserted. There were no porters, nobody to whom I could surrender my ticket. And then, as I left the platform, I noticed an antiquated yellow touring car in the lane below.

The driver hailed me cheerfully. "Mr. Wort?"

"I am Wort," I agreed. "Dr. Humdrick?"

He whooped with laughter. "No, Humdrick sent me down to collect you. I'm one of your fellow sufferers—Timothy Shaw."

"Oh. How do you do?"

"Informality," said Shaw, "is a camp rule. We use first names or nicknames all the time. Do you have a nickname?"

"No."

"Not to worry. The boys will soon provide you with a selection, all offensive."

I WAS shocked. "Do you mean that insolence is actually encouraged? Surely that's taking things too far?"

"They're on holiday, chum," Shaw said.

"Yes, but——"

"No repressions in this camp. Humdrick's first law . . . *ergo* no rules, no punishments, no discipline." He scratched his nose. "Is that suitcase all your luggage?"

"Yes, why?"

"Someone should have told you." He looked at me pityingly. "There's no food, either. Most of us have private supplies."

"No *food?*"

"Well, precious little. Humdrick's second law: a potato saved is a penny earned."

"But that's absurd," I said. "I'm not a science man, of course, but I think it's been proved that people *need* food."

Shaw nodded. "All the same, if you take my advice, you'll steer clear of the dining marquee at mealtimes. There's no telling what the boys would do at the sight of an adult. . . . But hop in. It's time we were off."

SO I hopped. I might say I was unhappy at the bleak picture Shaw painted of Dr. Humdrick's summer camp. As he drove he told me of an incident the previous week when the staff had only just prevented the broiling alive of a boy named Cheetham.

"Shook old Humdrick into increasing the rations by two cans of bully a day," Shaw said. "He hadn't realized how ravenous the little cannibals were."

"Goodness gracious," I said. It was a terrifying anecdote. I clutched my little book on personality like a talisman. I felt I was going to need it.

Some twenty minutes later we rolled into the valley where the camp was situated. There was a pleasant expanse of greensward surrounded by trees and dotted with white tents. Shaw led me to a wooden hut, the only permanent building, which was the camp office.

Dr. Humdrick was a small man with a bald

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It was a teacher's nightmare . . . only his love for this girl

stopped him skinning her brother alive

This is YOU on . . .

The ten CRAZIEST

A DISHEVELLED, dripping holidaymaker came rushing across the cliffs at Hope Cove, a small Devon resort, and stumbled down to harbourmaster Percy Jarvis's cottage. Breathlessly he poured out his story: his boat had capsized off Bolt Head cliffs . . . he had managed to climb to safety, but his companion was still clinging to a sea-washed rock below the headland. . . .

Jarvis, a tough, gnarled man in his sixties, rounded up some fishermen and headed a boat out to sea.

It took two hours to pick up the exhausted amateur sailor and recover the capsized dinghy. Then the two holidaymakers went off to their hotel.

Two days later the rescued man turned up again. He told Jarvis he wanted to show his appreciation—and handed him half-a-crown.

Jarvis looked at it: "You don't seem to value your life at much." The holidaymaker flushed. "Well, that's the sort of thing you're here for, isn't it?"

During their annual stay at the seaside, holidaymakers take most kinds of service for granted. Twenty-four million Britons had holidays around our coasts last summer, a bumper year with receipts up to one-fifth higher than in 1958. Each visitor stayed, on average, between ten and eleven days, and spent £17-£18. With £70 million laid out by day-trippers, this brought a £500 million boom to Britain's holiday industry.

Millionaires

"At that price they'd scarcely be human if they didn't expect to be well looked after," says boatman Harry Wheaton, of Anstey's Cove.

"For a week or a fortnight every year these folk are spending three or four times more than usual. They feel like millionaires. They're very happy and they make my job a pleasure—providing I give them value and service.

"And that means helping them get away from all their everyday worries. Their holiday's another life to them."

This "other life" may mean lounging on the beach, swimming in the sea, walking on the promenade or cliffs, messing about in boats, playing miniature golf or riding dodgem cars—"doing things they don't usually do and having time to do them in," as a Llandudno innkeeper describes it.

He claims that holidaymakers react violently from everything associated with domesticity, and that wives set the pattern of the average holiday.

Carefree

Many hotels which have installed TV rooms, for instance, find them virtually unused. "Television reminds people too much of home," says a Clacton hotelier. "Wives want to be taken out when they're on holiday."

And wives crave for personal attention by the seaside—for at home *they* do the attending.

Seaside police officers assume that carefree holidaymakers will be less responsible than at home.

"They're well behaved and pleasant to deal with, of course," says a West Country police inspector, "but people *think* less on holiday. Drivers don't pay so much attention to pedestrian crossings or No Parking notices, and everyone is thoughtless about litter."

The results of this happy-go-lucky attitude have to be anticipated by resorts. Torquay has recently had to open a police sub-station on the promenade for the summer months, chiefly to deal with large quantities of property and children, both lost.

On the prom

Blackpool has installed a machine to clean up the litter-strewn tide-line every morning, and about seven tons of tins, bottles and paper are picked up in the resort daily. On the promenade, two old buses are used as centres for lost children—about forty of them a day.

The personalities of holidaymakers can change completely during their carefree fortnight by the sea. "They want to get away from themselves and present to the world the persons they would *like* to be," says a Bournemouth hotelier.

And a beach attendant says: "People don't talk a lot about their private life on holiday. They like to draw a veil over it, except for the bits they reckon are interesting or attractive — their other holidays, hotels, the food they like. They want others to see them in a glamorous light."

Being known, well regarded and remembered by those who serve them gives holidaymakers high prestige with their fellows and satisfies their "other life" streak of vanity.

"My clients get a real kick if I know their names," says beach inspector George Wotton, who handles ten thousand people daily at Torre Abbey sands in Torquay. "Families come up to me the morning after they've been out on an excursion and ask: 'Did you miss us off the beach yesterday?' "

One pier deckchair man was startled when a woman handed him a parcel.

"For you, George," she said. "You remember that pullover with the hole in it you had last year? Well, I've knitted you a new one. Now, you know my favourite spot, don't you?"

The attendant was baffled. "I'd no idea who she was, but I couldn't let on."

No seaside worker ever willingly admits *not* remembering a face, according to John Welsh, who runs a four-star hotel in Brighton. "If you really can remember them, you're made."

Slapstick

In many ways, holidaymakers are easy to please during their "other life." Comedian Nat Jackley regards seaside audiences as less critical than those in normal variety houses.

"They accept material you wouldn't normally try—old-type sketches, slapstick stuff, audience participation gimmicks. They'll clap, whistle, sing, show their knees, do anything for you."

Holidaymakers also seem easily amused by the machines on piers and in funfairs. Captain Jack Nye, piermaster at Brighton, says: "Thousands of people who never touch them at home crowd round them at the seaside."

Last summer, among a row of peep-show machines on the pier, Nye installed one with the title, "A Hot Scene in Paris." When visitors inserted their pennies, they saw a fire engine dashing through the streets. "It kept people laughing all summer."

Deckchairs

If holidaymakers do become bad-tempered, it is generally over minor irritations. "They haven't to worry about jobs, food, housework," explains Harry Wheaton. "Only little things remain to upset them, especially if they feel they're being gypped."

At Brighton, customers often argue over the fourpence refund granted if deckchairs are given up before the end of a hiring session.

Seaside visitors are both conservative and creatures of habit. About four million of them last year returned to resorts they had previously visited, and tens of thousands went back to the same hotel or beach.

All resorts put holidaymakers into categories—the same type of visitor coming regularly at the same time of year—and anticipate their following a fairly strict timetable each week.

In Blackpool, for instance, Saturday and Monday are theatre booking days, with queues at every box-office; Thursday is rock day, when supplies to take home are laid in; Friday is present day, when visitors look at the money they have left and see what they can afford to take back for relatives and friends.

Jack Nye and other piermasters believe that people become happier and friendlier once they are *over* the sea. "Going on a pier gives people that 'cruise' feeling," he says. He has to have only two men to keep order in the pier ballroom, compared with far larger numbers in ballrooms on shore.

Though resorts now reckon to be able

You're a wow on holiday! So chase those winter blues away with these views of YOU on the Giant Slide . . .

on the rocks . . .

days of your year

by HILARY AGATE

to foresee and satisfy most holiday-makers' whims, seaside workers admit that they are always getting surprises.

Torquay has been wondering how to cope with its "car park residents," whom no by-laws covered last year. These were visitors who arrived in converted cars and vans, paid a twenty-four hour parking fee daily, and then lived in promenade car parks for a week or a fortnight. Eighteen vehicles in convoy arrived from Coventry at one car park last summer.

In the sun

"They virtually took over that car park," recalls Peter Dawson, the town's catering manager.

"They cooked, ate and slept there, and sunned themselves sitting out on sofas they'd unloaded.

"They even did their washing on the spot—and one morning I remember seeing a mammoth line of shirts and underwear hanging out to dry on the prom railings. It didn't exactly blend with the scenery." THE END

on to a good thing . . . on the way to a happy ending

TOO MANY GHOSTS

Latest spine-chilling romance

by PAUL GALLICO

WHO was the Paradine nun? How did the harp play in the empty music-room? Alexander Hero had to find out, quickly. If he didn't, a young girl would be destroyed, and Paradine Hall would crash to ruin in a holocaust of fire. That is what Geraldine Taylor had prophesied, and Hero knew she was right. . . .

The girl threatened was an American, Susan Marshall. Who was the spectral nun? Lady Paradine, who resented her son Mark's love for Susan? Some other woman—Beth Paradine, or Isobel? Or a man—like Freddie, black sheep of the family? Or some guest at the country club in the Hall's east wing? Vivyan Wilson, perhaps, who was interested in Hero. Or her jealous husband, the major.

Only Hero could avert disaster. But now he himself was in danger. . . .

It was Geraldine Taylor, a club guest, who sent Hero from the coffee-drinking group on the lawn to fetch her scarf. He was coming back with it through the conservatory when horror struck once more . . . and Hero was caught in the toils of some scaly monster from the Pit.

The onlookers on the lawn stared at him, rooted in their terror. Then Major Wilson lifted his service pistol, aimed—and fired.

FINAL INSTALMENT

As the gun crashed, Hero threw himself down. There was a tinkling of glass as the bullet shattered the pane into fragments and buried itself with a fierce smack in the wall behind him. He waited a few seconds, then got up, brushing off the glass dust. There was nothing now between him and the spectators. They were still staring at him, but the madness and terror seemed to have left their faces.

As he came out through the shattered window, Hero seemed almost like an actor approaching the footlights to take his bow. A woman leaped the ditch and now hurled herself towards him, weeping hysterically, and crying: "Sandro, Sandro—you're alive!" It was his stepsister.

Hero said: "There, there, pet—what is it? It's all right, old girl. He didn't hit me."

Meg was still trembling. She said: "But the thing, Sandro—the monster. We all saw it. It had you by the throat. . . ." She broke down.

Sir Richard Lockerie and Lord Paradine came running up. "My God, Hero, are you all right?" Sir Richard cried. And Paradine said: "By God, Hero, we thought you were a goner."

They were all about him in a crowd now, speaking in a jumble. But Hero went on through without seeming to listen, until he came to where Major Wilson was standing, the heavy service revolver hanging in his hand, pointing towards the ground. Vivyan Wilson was standing next to him, her knuckles pressed to her temples, staring at the gun and then at Hero as he advanced. She whispered: "Oh, Alexander!"

Hero stood in front of the major looking at him and not saying a word. Major Wilson gave his shark smile and said: "Sorry, old man, if I gave you a scare—first time I'd ever seen a real ghost. Shook me, I guess. Horrible monster—staring eyes, long snout like an elephant. Have to admit it shook me."

Hero said: "I thought I told you not to hunt ghosts with a gun. I'll have that, please."

He held out his hand, and without another word the major reversed the revolver and handed it over.

Hero turned away and said: "Right. Now I want someone to tell me exactly what it was you thought you saw in the conservatory. Susan, what about you—you've got a level head on you."

The American girl, still white-faced, pleaded: "I can't. For the first time in my life I'm afraid."

Dr. Paulson said: "I think perhaps I kept my head as well as anyone, though I'll admit that I was badly upset. Still, by profession I'm trained to observe."

Hero said: "Very well, I'd be obliged."

Paulson, a scientist staying at the country club, launched into a fair and reasonably accurate description of how they had all seen Hero in the conservatory, struggling in the grip of a strange serpent-like monster.

Hero listened carefully. "What happened after the shot and the shattering of the glass?" he said at last.

PAULSON hesitated over the words for a moment: "Why, the monster disappeared as if . . . as if by magic. One moment it was there and the next instant it was gone, and you were lying on the floor. At first I thought you might have been hit, but when you stood up a moment later we saw that the major's shot had come in time, and that you had been spared and were unharmed."

"Then you would say that the major's quick thinking saved my life?" Hero suggested.

"I have not the slightest doubt of this," said Dr. Paulson.

There was a murmur of assent. Major Wilson said with sudden affability: "Glad it turned out all right, old man. I don't usually miss."

Hero said gravely: "Thank you, all of you, for your help and your concern. Now I am going to

DEATH COMES C

She had walked for the last time.

her phanto

feared that Paradine

ILLUSTRATED BY ZELINSKI

LOSEST

Now came

music—and when it ended Hero

Hall would be no more

Sir Richard fell on his
knees by the bed in a frenzy
of anguish. "Is
she dead, Hero?" he cried

Too many ghosts

continued from page 16

ask all of you to go to your rooms and set down exactly what you have seen and heard."

Startlingly, Isobel said: "Will you believe now that there is a curse upon this house? It is not yet done."

For the first time the engineer Ellison became communicative. He said: "I should be interested in seeing *your* report, Hero. You were rather in the thick of it, weren't you?"

Ellison was looking not at Hero, but at the scarf that still hung over the investigator's arm. Hero looked at it then himself, and said: "Oh! Sorry," and handed it to Mrs. Taylor, who took it in a kind of daze.

She whispered: "I nearly got you killed, didn't I?"

"Nonsense," Hero said. "Will you please all go up now and prepare your reports?"

They filed away slowly and into the house until only Meg was left, looking strangely pitiful. She said: "I don't want to leave you, Sandro."

He went to her, took her hand gently and said: "It's all right, Meg dear, it's all over. Nothing's going to happen to me. Go to your room. I'll come in and see you later, after I've had a bit of a snoop around."

She still lingered wistfully. "You're sure, Sandro?"

He said: "Oh, sure enough." He grinned at her. "They play rough here, but they won't any more."

He took her by the shoulders and turned her towards the house. Then he went and stood for a moment looking at the conservatory. The pane of glass shattered by the bullet had been leaning at an angle inside the conservatory. It had been a new one, that was to have replaced a pane broken by workmen who had been digging a drainage ditch.

He pulled a pipe from a pocket, loaded it slowly and got it going. Then he walked over to the ditch and looked in, and saw there exactly what he had expected to see.

"Oh, my!" he said. "Old Doctor Pepper would have enjoyed this. . . ."

ALEXANDER HERO came into his sister's room an hour later carrying a paper parcel under his arm. "All right, my dear, you can relax," he said, unwrapping the paper. "There you are," he said, "that's your bogy, isn't it?"

Meg stared at the object, the goggling eyes of it, and the long corrugated snout, and then she burst into a sudden peal of laughter. "Oh Lord, Sandro," she cried, "to think that I never recognized it—it's a gas mask, of course. But where did you find it?"

"In the ditch," Hero said, "where somebody put it but didn't have time to get it out."

"In the ditch!" Meg cried. "But then how did it get into the conservatory?"

"Stage illusion," Hero said. "One of the oldest. Known as 'Pepper's Ghost,' but it hasn't been seen for years—not since the old magic shows."

Meg still looked bewildered.

"Someone recognized that the angle of the new pane of glass for the conservatory window and the ditch cut in front of it for the drains was almost the perfect set-up for the illusion. The gas mask had been put into the ditch with a lantern and covered by a tarpaulin with a rope attached. A twitch of the rope by someone sitting close to the ditch—and off came the tarpaulin. The lantern illuminated the mask and threw the reflection via the tilted glass so that the apparition actually appeared to be inside the room. The conservatory was lit by a single lamp. I walked into it carrying Mrs. Taylor's scarf, and obligingly furnished the thing with a handsome serpent's body. Q.E.D."

MEG stared at the thing on the table before her. "But who would do such a thing?" she asked.

Hero replied: "The major, I fancy. He probably found the gas mask in a cupboard somewhere."

The horror returned to Meg's face. "He was trying to kill you," she said.

"I rather think so," Hero agreed, "but perhaps not. Perhaps his original idea was only to make a fool of me."

Meg said: "Then this has nothing to do with the other ghosts?"

Hero shrugged. "The case always does seem to fall apart just as I appear to be getting somewhere, doesn't it? Anyway, I still have to prove that Major Wilson had knowledge of how to work Pepper's Ghost."

"Sandro," Meg began in a tentative voice. "Why not have a word with Mr. Ellison? You once said that to play the harp one would have to be some kind of acoustical engineer. Isn't Ellison at least half of what you're looking for—at least the engineer part?"

Hero went over and kissed her gently on one eye. He said: "Thank God somebody in our family has some brains. He picked up the gas mask, rewrapped it, and went to the door.

BY then it was close to midnight. The house was dark and had quietened down, but there was a light shining from beneath Ellison's door. When Hero knocked it was opened by the engineer, in dressing-gown and slippers. There was a bottle on his table and two glasses.

"Come in, come in," Ellison said. "I've been rather expecting you. As a matter of fact, I've been wondering for some time how long it would take you to get around to me." He closed the door, pointed to the bottle on the table, and said: "Pour."

"Thank you," Hero said. He placed his package on the table, poured himself a drink, and accepted a cigar.

The paper wrapping around the gas mask had come undone and revealed what was there. Ellison said: "I see you've found it."

So Ellison knew! It was something of a shock to Hero to discover his sister so right so quickly. He nodded.

Ellison said: "I rather thought you would. Anyone belonging to the Magicians' Circle would be bound to recognize Pepper's Ghost."

Hero said sharply: "What do *you* know about Pepper's Ghost?"

Ellison laughed. "I once belonged to the circle myself. But I still get their literature. That's how I knew you were a member." He smiled. "You've heard, of course, of the oriental magician Rajah Rham Singh? I was his mechanic."

Hero's mind absorbed this startling revelation. He drew on the Havana.

"I wonder," he said, "if, having been so frank, you might tell me why you have been haunting Paradine Hall."

"I?" said Ellison in astonishment. "Are you serious, Hero? I assure you, the only thing I have been haunting is that confounded bunker in the fairway on the sixth. Whatever would I be playing such silly tricks for?"

"Then why didn't you say something—if you knew what was going on?"

"I like to mind my own business," Ellison said. "In any case, it seemed to me that you were doing very well

continued on page 23

Rarity

When going on errands,
It's quite an event for
A child to return
With the item he's sent for.

RICHARD ARMOUR

Sally Hops On A Bus

For opposite extremes, said Sally, you couldn't beat the bus driver and the bus conductor. The one, stuck all alone for hours with nobody to talk to—no wonder he played crawling games and raced passengers to request stops, if only to relieve the tedium; and the other a non-stop patter man, what with Fares Please and Hold Tightly, No Standing on the Top There and the names of stops, let alone all the repartee.

They were usually as cheerful as the drivers were glum, she'd noticed, but once in a while you found the exception who was soured with the whole human race. Sally had crossed swords with one of these last week and was still fuming at the thought.

It was raining and she'd been bundled up with shopping baskets and children and a pushchair, which was what had caused the trouble. Sally said the conductor drew himself up to his full five foot, terribly offended because she hadn't asked his permission to bring it aboard and couldn't she read the notice?

When at last he'd grudgingly let her on, Sally thought for one ghastly moment that she hadn't enough change for the fare and would have to offer him a pound note. But with two farthings she'd been hoarding, she just made it.

It couldn't have been a better revenge if she'd planned it, said Sally: she now knows that if there's one thing a bus conductor hates more than pound notes, it's farthings. What really shook her, she said, was seeing the driver look back over his shoulder and laugh.

DAPHNE BOUTWOOD

English At Oh! Level

Metaphysically....*Happened to dance with her.*
Motorist....*Sprain caused by cranking.*
Scholarship....*Boatload of young tourists.*
Elliptical....*Kiss from man with a moustache.*
Lieutenant....*Departed lodger.*
Onomatopoeia....*See the boss at once.*
Neuritis....*Up-and-coming authors.*
Cholera....*Policeman.*
Ill-gotten....*National Health benefit.*
Buddhism....*Art of growing giant chrysanthemums.*
Matricide....*Place to keep money safe at night.*
Abhor....*Tiresome companion.*

RONALD A. SLINN

PERSONAL COLUMN

WILL the gentleman from Texas who did not meet Brown Eyes on Tuesday please put a match to his oil well and jump in it?

PARROTS' accents corrected by well-known Teacher of Elocution. "My Joey was a right Geordie," writes Mrs. B—C—. "Now, thanks to you, he talks like a proper Charlie."

ASSISTANT rocker needed for titled infant. Mucilage Towers, South Riding.

GENUINE hara-kiri swords are useful as well as ornamental. Oriental Supplies Ltd., Bognor.

TO humanitarians: urge your M.P. to support Sir Theodore Grigg's Bill to enforce red rear reflectors on tortoises.

STOLEN: van containing 200 dolls' clothes-lines, five gross budgerigar mirrors, crate of artificial candle drips, 100 ornamental toad-houses, six boxes plastic toffee-hammers, and 20 doz. leg-shaped propelling pencils. Reward for information to Nifty Novelty Co., Witsend-on-Sea.

ARE YOU driven crazy by pigeons cooing down your chimneys? Revenge yourself with the "Little Wizard" chimney-top electric siren, operated from bedside. JB 102.

GLUG! Wham! Harumph! Socko! If you can spell simple words like these there is a well-paid career for you with [illegible] Comics, Charing

E. S. TURNER

A Step Too Far

We met at a shelf in the
Do-It-Yourself;
A letter-rack later we dined.
By a pair of book-ends after
that we were friends
Of a rather particular kind.

A divan by and by he described
with a sigh
The passion that tortured
him so.
We were wed the next gate,
never guessing our fate
A collapsible ladder ago.

HAZEL TOWNSON

A wall-hung sideboard which communicates with the kitchen through a hatch is a space economizer in a small dining-room. Storage cupboards have a door on each side and so can be reached from kitchen or dining-room. The broad top of the sideboard borrows space from the kitchen area

MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME

Where there's a wall there's a way

Furniture on the wall saves space and money

by ROGER SMITHELLS

WHEN you're short of furniture, and short of floor space at the same time, the answer is to hang it on the wall. Compact, wall-hung furniture, either separate pieces or parts of a unit system, will give you maximum service in a minimum space. The clear floor underneath gives an uncluttered impression, and simplifies cleaning.

There is no limit nowadays to the sort of furniture you can hang on the wall. There are bookshelves, of course, but you can also buy desks, dressing tables, sideboards, even dining tables, which are all wall-mounted. Fixing methods vary. Single pieces are usually screwed directly on to the wall, suspended on mirror-plates or supported on angle brackets. Unit systems have some kind of fixing track which is screwed to the wall. On this track you can hang any of the unit pieces, varying the combinations and levels to suit your special needs.

Wall fixing is much simplified by the modern range of plugging devices. Apart from the familiar fibre plugs, there are bolts and screws for fixing into thin cavity walls, plasterboard and lath and plaster partitions, and filling compounds strong enough to take screws for use in masonry or defective plaster. Many of the special bolts and screws have gripping devices which are pushed into the wall with the bolt, and make a permanent hold when tightened.

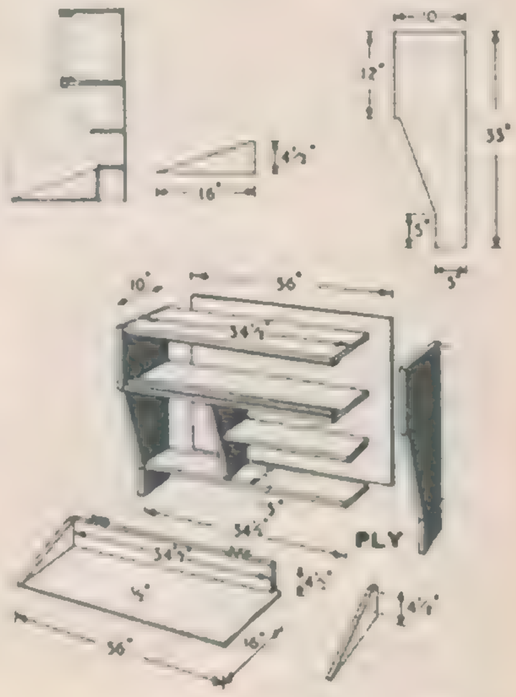
All-purpose shelves

Wall furniture can be easy to make. A simple shelf in the right place will serve as dressing table, hall table, breakfast counter, or work table. Several shelves linked together can form quite elaborate pieces of wall furniture. Below and overleaf are four simple wall fitments which I have designed for handyman readers of JOHN BULL. You could design others on similar lines.

MAKE THESE YOURSELF

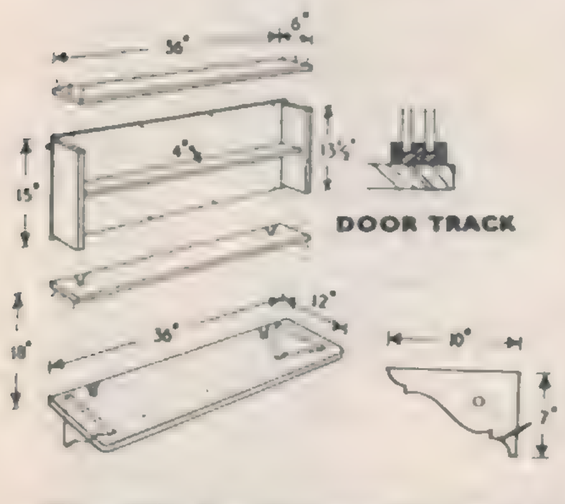
Foldaway fitment for a bedsitter

These simple fitments are all made on the same lines. Shelves and uprights are nailed and bonded together with adhesive and backed with a sheet of hardboard fixed with adhesive and panel pins. Wall fixing in most cases is with mirror plates. Angle brackets can be used for extra strength. Finish fitments with glossy paint. My choice is white for the outsides, bright colours inside.



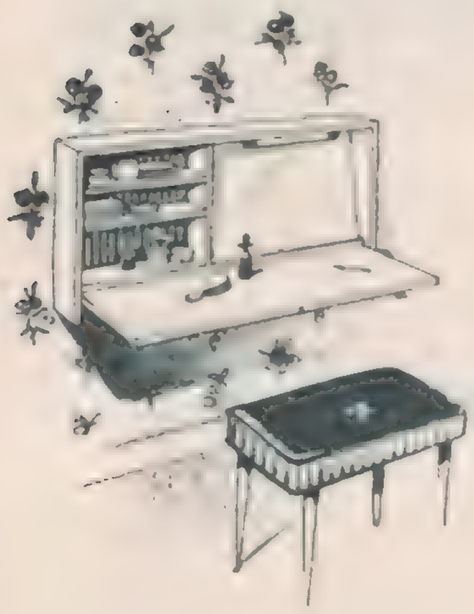
Materials: Two ends 33 in. × 10 in. × ¾ in. Two top shelves 34½ in. × 10 in. × ¾ in. Bottom shelf 34½ in. × 5 in. × ¾ in. Interior shelf 20 in. × 5½ in. × ¾ in. Divider 15½ in. × 9 in. × ¾ in. Hardboard back 36 in. × 33 in. × ¼ in. Two 34½-in. double track door channels. Two Perspex doors 18 in. × 10 in. For the fall-front: One sheet ½-in. ply 36 in. × 16 in. Two sides 16 in. × 4½ in. × ¾ in. Back 34½ in. × 4½ in. × ¾ in. Two hinges and swivel catch for fall-front.

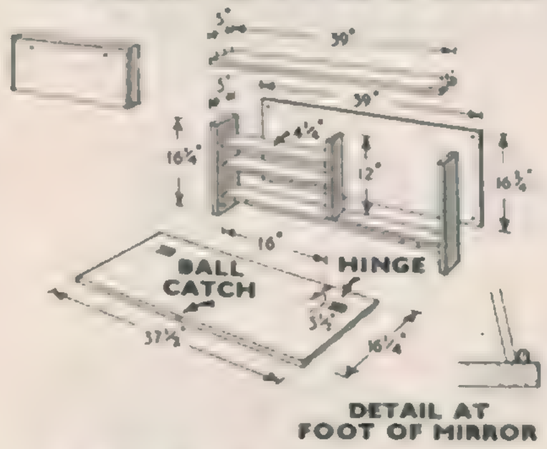
Two-seater dining bar



Materials: For the counter: one ¾-in. ply shelf and one Formica facing sheet 36 in. × 12 in. Two brackets 10 in. × 7 in. × 1 in. For the storage fitment: Two shelves 36 in. × 6 in. × ¾ in. Interior shelf 34½ in. × 4 in. × ¾ in. Two sides 13½ in. × 6 in. × ¾ in. Hardboard back 36 in. × 15 in. Two hardboard doors 18 in. × 13 in., two 34½-in. double track door channels. Formica wall panel 36 in. × 18 in.

A slim vanity chest for a small bedroom





DETAIL AT FOOT OF MIRROR

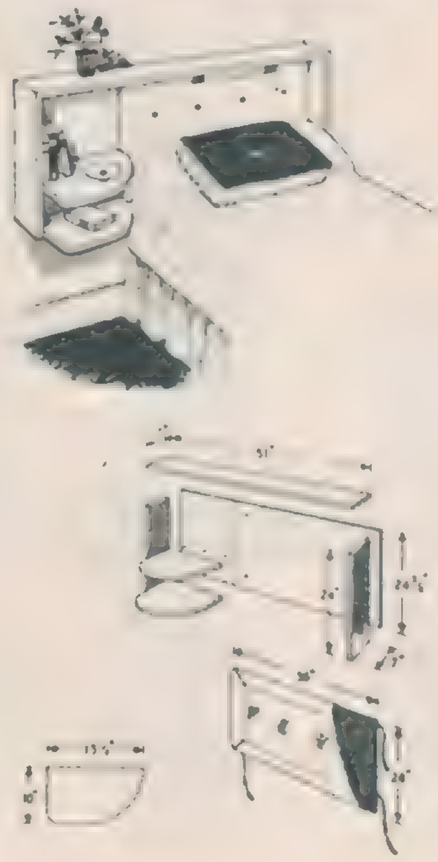
Materials: Top 39 in. × 5 in. × ¾ in. Bottom shelf 37½ in. × 4¼ in. × ¾ in. Two interior shelves 16 in. × 4¼ in. × ¾ in. Interior divider 12 in. × 4¼ in. × ¾ in. Hardboard back 39 in. × 16¾ in. ¾-in. plywood fall-front 37½ in. × 16¼ in. One strip of moulding across foot of mirror 21 in. × ½ in. Unframed mirror 20 in. × 12 in. Ball catch, a pair of screw-in knob handles and pair of hinges for fall-front. Pegs of ½-in. dowelling to form table-rests.

The practical value of the vanity chest will be much increased if you fit a striplight over the mirror, as shown in the drawing. Add a decorative note to the fitment with a rich paint or wallpaper background to the shelves. Fix the dowel pegs on which the fall-front rests *after* screwing the hinges in position. This way the position of the supporting pegs can be fixed exactly.

Headboard with a difference

Materials: Top shelf 51 in. × 7 in. × ¾ in. Two sides 24 in. × 7 in. × ¾ in. Two shelves 13½ in. × 10 in. × ¾ in. Back of ¼-in. plywood 51 in. × 24¾ in. × ¼ in. Hardboard mounting for padded bedhead portion 36 in. × 24 in. Padding material—latex foam, rubberised hair or kapok. Covering material 48 in. × 36 in. Fixing tapes.

Before fixing the padding on its hardboard panel drill holes and thread lengths of strong tape or narrow webbing as shown in the diagram. Later these tapes are threaded through corresponding holes in the main headboard before the whole fitment is screwed to the wall. The covering material should be stretched over the padding and the edges stuck to the back of the hardboard.



Going up—fast

continued from page 7

were soon comparing him with Lord Monckton, one of the most respected of Heath's predecessors.

Heath's instinct for personal relations is his crowning asset. Soon after taking office, he invited his two main advisory committees, on labour relations and industrial health, to meet him over sherry in the ministry library. He steered among his guests dispensing jokes and making quite sure that nobody missed the pleasure of his personal attention. Said one T.U.C. man: "The boy knows his stuff—I think."

One of Heath's main characteristics is concern for what others think.

Discipline

Even at the height of the Suez crisis he achieved the apparently impossible by keeping discipline among the contending factions while making few personal enemies in the process. As tempers flared, his own voice never rose above conversational level. "And," as one Tory M.P. has said, "nobody knew where he stood, either." In the end, even the rebels spoke of his fairness and patience.

Beneath the outer layer of discretion and sweet reasonableness, however, Heath is tough. He has been described as "capable of being absolutely ruthless but never of being unprincipled."

Some Tory M.P.s who strayed from the fold during the last Parliament know all about the hard streak. By keeping his ears wide open and his mouth tight shut, Heath learned all he needed to know about minor rebellions and broke them up even before they were properly worked out. On such occasions, his charm was sometimes missing: some Tories still shudder at the memory of his in-fighting. His weapons were words—in the right place at the right time.

Publicity

There is nothing artificial about Heath's amiable manner, and his private life is as quiet as he sometimes seems to wish his public life could be. He detests the flashy and spectacular, and is diffident about publicity.

Heath's speeches lack fire and humour. When he did try to liven up a speech with some rousing phrases, he made his worst public performance. Another time, a supporter asked him: "Why don't you put in a bit more humour?"

"I can't," Heath replied simply.

Weakness

This inability to appear larger than life is seen by some of his critics as a weakness which will hamper Heath's progress. "It's all very well to run Parliament's own silent service from a small back room," says one critic, "but he's got to come out in the open now—and get used to the spotlight."

But his past record suggests that he is less naïve about public relations than some would make out.

When he was adopted Parliamentary candidate for Bexley, Kent, he promptly arranged a series of business men's lunches to which he brought a procession of famous speakers (his talent for influencing V.I.P.s is such that at the last reckoning he had coaxed fourteen Cabinet ministers to Bexley to speak for him, during and between elections). He soon became known locally, and after ousting Labour in 1950 by a majority of 133 votes, he made it a "safe" Tory seat last October, with a majority of 8,633.

Ambition

His ambition and determination have never been hard to detect. As a junior at his local grammar school, Chatham House, near Ramsgate, he once confided to his family that he aimed to go to Oxford on a scholarship. A little later, he said more precisely that it would have to be Balliol College. Not only did he go to Balliol, but he became president of the Oxford Union.

In 1940 he joined the Royal Artillery as a gunner. His progress was rapid. On leave once, he mentioned at home that he would like one day to command his regiment. Before he was finished with the army, he commanded the 2nd Regiment Honourable Artillery Company, Territorial Army, and even became Master Gunner within the Tower. If Heath has since made any further confession of his aims, nobody seems to have heard them.

REPUTATION—I

The great difficulty is first of winning a reputation; the next of keeping it while you live; and the next to preserve it after you die.

B. R. Haydon

He is devoted to his family—during the 1951 election he drove to the coast every night to see his mother, who was seriously ill—and is unlikely to confide in any outsider. For all his success as chief whip, Heath is a political lone wolf. For all his geniality, his social life is marked by caution. "He has a few friends but no real buddies," says one acquaintance.

Bachelor

Despite his reluctance to enter into relationships which might one day be embarrassing, Heath has a tremendous capacity for winning people's trust. This quality will undoubtedly serve Heath well in his dealings with employers and trade union leaders.

And his human touch shows no sign of deserting him now that he's a minister. One morning recently he walked over to the ministry from his bachelor flat in Petty France and arrived along with a number of civil servants. He entered the lift, and the attendant then barred the way, closed the gates and took him to the second floor. On the way, Heath asked why the others had been left. The liftman said it was a tradition that the minister should have the lift to himself. Later, Heath gave instructions that the practice should be stopped. Now he travels with the "workers."

THE END

"Which one, Mummy?"

Colman's make three mustards now

NOW YOU CAN enjoy Colman's Mustard in *three* delicious ways. There's one to suit every taste and every dish, and they all make your food more exciting and appetizing.

There's bright, golden *English* mustard — the familiar powder in the friendly yellow tin (or the tubes of *PicNic* Mustard). Subtle *French* Mustard, delicately blended with herbs and spices and fine vinegar. And latest of all, exciting new *Mild* Mustard, to sound the clear mustard note more softly.

For any meat or savoury dish you can think of, one of Colman's mustards is exactly right — with it on the plate, or *in* it when you cook. They give good cooks a whole range of interesting new flavours to ring the changes with—in sauces, stuffings, dressings, marinades. Try them out for yourself.

Mustard *makes* the meal

Colman's of course!

Wort and the Angel boy

continued from page 12

brown head and a face like a boiled parsnip. "Ha, Wort," he said. "Delighted. You'll be in charge of the blue team."

I nodded dumbly.

Humdrick handed me a typewritten list. "Here's your roster," he said. "Eighteen boys. You'll meet them later. Have you had tea, by the way?"

"Not yet," I said.

"Oh, well you won't get any now. Pity. Our next meal is breakfast." He looked at me critically. "Your tent's over there—the end one with the blue pennant. Better go and change into your shorts. You have brought shorts?"

"Two pairs."

"Good. Cut along then, Worty."

FEELING somewhat dazed. I made my way to the tent indicated. I had to go on all fours to get inside. With some difficulty I got into khaki shorts.

"Every day, in every way, I grow better and better," I told myself, remembering *The Book of Power*.

I was repacking my suitcase when I heard voices approaching. A moment later, with unusual formality, Humdrick called, "Are you there, Mr. Wort?"

Crawling on all fours from the tent, I observed that from close quarters, Humdrick's legs were surprisingly long and shapely. He was wearing a cute little pair of shorts. And above that—

"Oh, my word," I said faintly.

She was tall, for a girl, and ineffably beautiful. Magnificent grey eyes. Superb figure. Ravishing smile.

"Get *up*, Mr. Wort," Humdrick was saying impatiently.

I staggered to my feet. I still felt dazed. "How do you do, Miss—er——"

"Angel."

"Well, snap my suspenders!" said a hated, well-remembered voice.

I performed a kind of Cossack leap, turning in the air and coming down to stand facing Jonathan Angel, the Terror of the Remove, as he emerged from behind my tent. He was fondling a huge clasp-knife and leering like the managing director of Murder Inc.

"What are you doing here?" I demanded.

"Been staying with him," Angel said briefly, jerking his thumb towards a thin young man who was coming towards us carrying a bulging suitcase.

Humdrick turned to me jovially. "Do I gather, Mr. Wort, that Jonathan is a pupil at St. Barnadyke's?"

"But how delightful for Jonathan to have a friend already here," his sister said, smiling at me.

I smiled back weakly.

"Oh, Rodney," the girl said. "Was it terribly heavy?"

SHE was addressing the young fellow with the suitcase. He dumped it on the grass and smoothed his large, buttercup-yellow moustache. "Terribly heavy, Vanessa," he agreed. "But, to be rid of your brother, I would have carried a house."

"That's not an awfully nice thing to say, Rodney" Miss Angel said severely. Then she gave me another winning smile. "This is Mr. Wort who will be looking after Jonathan now. Mr. Wort—my fiancé, Rodney Harding."

"How do you do?" I said.

Rodney flapped a languid hand and sneered at my bare knees.

From the direction of the dining marquee there was a sudden menacing roar. Humdrick started and looked worriedly over his shoulder. "Oh, dear," he said. "They must be fighting over the marmalade . . . Miss Angel, if I may have a word with you for a minute. . . ."

He moved away with her, talking quietly. I turned to watch them—or, to be more accurate, her.

Rodney hissed: "Listen, you little pill——"

One has one's dignity. Greatly offended, I swung to face him. But he was addressing Angel.

"If you show your horrible face within a mile of Linden Towers this next week, I'll have your intestines for shoelaces," Rodney said venomously.

I awaited Angel's reply with some interest. His command of insulting repartee was a by-word at St. Barnadyke's. But he said nothing.

And suddenly I saw that he was scared to death of Rodney Harding. Heaven knows, I had little enough reason to feel any affection for the lad myself but—well, he was a St. Barnadyke's boy and a member of my form.

"Jonathan is in my charge now, Mr. Harding," I said as coldly as I could. "Please remember that I shall be responsible for his behaviour."

Rodney looked at me contemptuously.

"I didn't ask you to butt in," he said, "but since you have—just remember what I said. Keep the kid out of my way or there'll be trouble."

The man was really insufferable. I turned my back on him and picked up

REPUTATION—?

A great reputation is a great noise: the more there is made, the farther off it is heard.

Napoleon Bonaparte

Angel's case. "Come, Jonathan," I said. "Let us find your tent."

I was leaving him to unpack when Vanessa appeared. "Oh, Jonathan, I'm sure you'll like it better here with boys of your own age," she said. "Won't he, Mr. Wort?"

"I hope so," I said.

Somebody outside the tent gave a sneering laugh. "I think Mr. Harding is waiting for you," I said.

"Yes . . . well." She bent and kissed her brother on the forehead. "Be good, darling," she said. "I'll come over in the week to see you."

Angel squirmed sullenly and shot me a glance that promised dire misfortune if ever a word of this reached St. Barnadyke's.

"Perhaps I shall see you, too, Mr. Wort?" Vanessa said, smiling.

"Yes, please," I said stupidly. "I mean—that is, it will be a pleasure."

WHEN she had gone I walked moodily back to my tent, brooding on a world that seemed full of savage perversity; a world which provided a maggot for every apple and in which the most bewitching girl I had ever met was engaged to a miserable crumb like Rodney Harding.

Oh, what an irony of fate, I thought, crawling wretchedly into my tent. What can she *see* in him? How can a girl like that—the tent collapsed limply on top of me in folds of smothering, clammy canvas. I fought my way out, too late, remembering how Angel had appeared from behind it, clasp-knife in hand. . . . I reworded the thought: How can a girl like that have a brother like that. . . .

Before I entered my tent that night I checked the guy ropes carefully. I was not going to be caught again. Then I went in and sank on to my camp bed. Its partially severed legs collapsed immediately. Bruised, hungry and exhausted, I lay among the wreckage thinking of the words of wisdom in *The Book of Power*.

THAT was the first day in a week of agony. Looking after those boys was torture. Indeed, long before I had been there twenty-four hours, I was concentrating solely on looking after myself. If I hadn't, I should never have survived. They put frogs in my bed, they sewed up the legs of my shorts in the night, they lit a fire in my suitcase and laid booby-traps.

One night the six boys in Angel's tent were all violently sick. I was on the run with aspirins and glasses of water until four in the morning. Angel, I learned, had left Linden Towers with a box of cigars.

Angel had recovered all his old, evil insouciance. But he did tell me, in a moment of false friendship, how he and his sister had come to be staying at Linden Towers.

Apparently, when our school term ended, his parents were in Madeira and not due back for a fortnight. He had become Vanessa's responsibility and she, having just agreed to marry Rodney Harding, took him with her on her first visit to Rodney's parents.

HIS parents were old—"About a hundred, I should think," Angel said—and his lively presence undoubtedly disturbed the placidity of life at Linden Towers. On his first day he broke three panes of glass in the conservatory, destroyed a fifty-year-old fig tree, and the baize of the billiard table.

"Is that why they kicked you out?" I asked

"Oh, no, it wasn't that," Angel said. "It was when I knocked the suit of armour over on Rodney. He got fearfully shirty and the doctor said——"

"Wait a minute. What doctor?"

"The one who stitched his head, of course. Why don't you *listen*? He said Rodney had to take it easy. And Rodney said how could he take it easy with a juvenile homicidal maniac loose in the house. He meant me."

"Yes, I understand. Go on."

"Well, the doctor said why not send me to this camp, and Rodney said that was the first sensible suggestion he'd ever heard the doctor make."

"Were you there all this time?"

Angel hesitated. "Not actually *there*. But I heard what they were saying: I was up the chimney, you see. They have jolly big chimneys——"

"Up the chimney? Why?"

"Because Rodney was hunting me with a dirty great elephant gun. I told you he was fearfully shirty. He was foaming at the mouth—real foam. Not like old Temple when he got the soap and pretended to have a fit and you panicked and——"

"I remember the incident with horrid clarity," I said. "Go on."

ANGEL looked at me blankly. "But that's all. 'Course, I waited till Rodney had simmered down before I came out of the chimney. I was jolly glad to get away from that house."

"Did Vanessa see this?" I asked.

"No, she was in the garden. Oh, he's as nice as pie when she's around. . . . Gosh, won't it be awful if she marries him!" Angel said.

For the first time I felt a kinship for the boy. Perhaps we did belong to the same species, after all.

Vanessa came to the camp a couple of times during the week. On each occasion she greeted me warmly. To think of all this beauty being wasted on a man with a buttercup-coloured moustache!

The very thought made me sick at heart. And I had fanciful moments when, remembering the warmth of her manner, I had wild dreams of attaining the unattainable—dreams where Rodney stood revealed as a violent scoundrel who pursued small boys with an elephant gun, and Vanessa turned to me in adoration and gratitude—"Oh, September, how noble you are! How can I ever thank you enough?" she would say. . . .

Naturally, I consulted *The Book of Power*, but it was not very helpful.

"A manly personality is the most important factor in successful courtship and love," it said. "Develop strength of character, leadership, and masculine magnetism."

The only consolation I could derive from this was that, as far as my prejudiced eye could see, Rodney's stock of these particular valuable qualities was even lower than mine.

HUMDRICK told me towards the middle of the second week to draw rations from the cookhouse and take my team out on a ten-mile hike across country. He gave me a map of the route we were to follow.

As it happens, walking is one of my favourite pastimes and I set out that morning in reasonably fair spirits. I had only to keep fifty yards ahead of the boys, I reasoned, and nothing very drastic could happen to me.

The first two or three hours were fairly uneventful. Gigwick was chased for half a mile by an irate ram and there was a delay while we rescued Harris from a quarry. Up to this point we were making good time and must have been several miles from the camp when the storm broke.

It came very suddenly while we were straggling down a bare, rock-strewn hillside. In ten minutes the sky changed from blue to an ominous, battleship grey and heavy drops of rain began to fall. There was a wood at the foot of the hill, about a hundred yards away. It was the only possible shelter and, as the rain quickened, I led the boys in a dash for the trees.

There was a three-strand wire fence in front of the wood and signs every few yards along it: "Private Property—Keep Out" and "Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted—By Order."

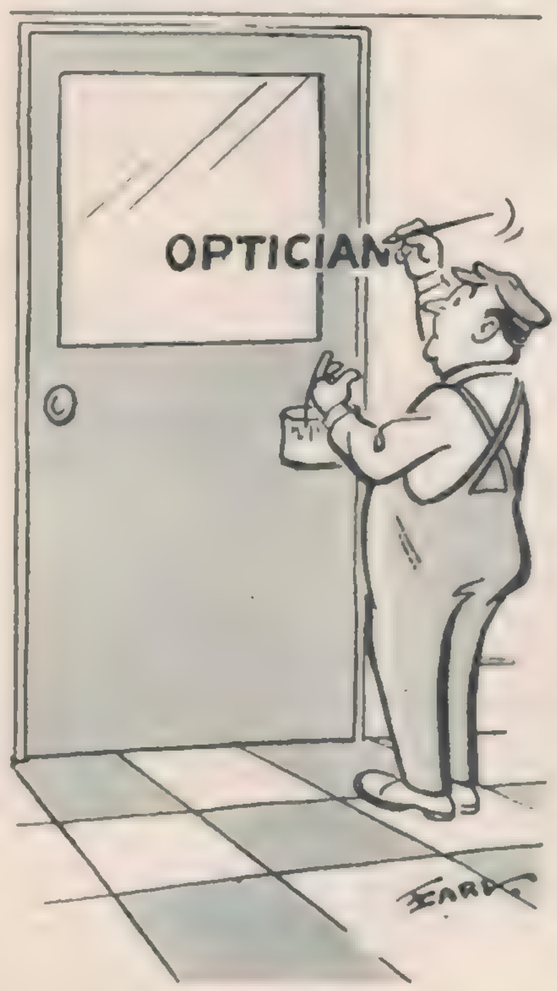
Normally, I obey such injunctions unquestioningly. I keep off the grass and refrain from depositing litter and all that sort of thing. But this time it was different. I had the welfare of the boys to consider. A soaking could lead to pneumonia or trench foot or worse.

"Over the fence quickly," I shouted. The rain was falling in sheets now. We plunged into the woods and I got them organized in groups huddled under groundsheets.

We had been there half an hour, and the rain had slackened to little more than drizzle, when I saw someone stamping towards us through the trees. He was heavily disguised in gum-boots and an enormous rubber mackintosh, but I recognized that rain-beaded yellow moustache. He was carrying a knobbly ash walking-stick and he came straight up to where I was standing.

"Can't you read?" he said unpleasantly.

"Quite well, thank you," I said.



RODNEY turned red. "Get these hooligans out of here at once," he ordered.

"They're not hooligans."

"Get them out!"

"When it stops raining," I said coolly.

"No, this minute," Rodney shouted, suddenly losing his temper and waving his stick threateningly. "If you don't, by God, there'll be a few broken heads!"

"Put that stick down and don't be silly," I said.

For a moment I thought he was going to choke. He pushed his inflamed face to within six inches of mine.

"Listen, you knock-kneed scoutmaster, I'll give you just five seconds

continued on page 26

Everybody's Puzzling

QUIZZLE

The letters in numbered squares, if placed in the small grid to the left of the puzzle in numerical sequence, will spell a well-known quotation and help to check your solutions.

CLUE DOWN

A. Present title of ex-Queen Wilhelmina of Holland (8, 2, 3, 11).

CLUES ACROSS

A. Perfume obtained from dried roots of Indian plant.
B. Heraldic term for red.
C. To restrain.
D. Lower.
E. Bitter, aromatic herb used medicinally.
F. In Greek mythology, the abode of the blessed dead.
G. Upholstered seat with back and arms.
H. Floating mass of gulf weed.
I. Latter part of life (3, 3).
J. One of a mendicant order of Friars in Roman Catholic Church.
K. Newt.
L. Chief town of N.E. Hawaii, referred to in a sea shanty.
M. A poor man's one possession (3-4).
N. English herald and King of Arms.
O. Small hole to receive string or prong.
P. Small top to spin in gambling game.
Q. Bribe for silence (4-5).
R. Act of going out.
S. An added clause.
T. Rich abundance.
U. Magistrate of ancient Rome.
V. Perhaps described by little Tommy as a buttress! (5-4).
W. Mr. Doolittle's calling.
X. Horse kept for breeding.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
51	52	53	54	55	56				

A		1		2	3	4				
B			5							
C		6				7				
D			8	9						
E		10			11	12				
F	13		14							
G	15	16								
H			17				18			
I		19		20						
J	21				22				23	
K		24				25				
L		26	27							
M	28		29							
N					30					
O	31			32						
P			33		34					
Q			35				36	37		
R	38	39				40		41		
S		42	43							
T		44						45	46	
U	47	48	49							
V		50			51					
W		52		53	54					
X			55	56						

BRAIN TEASER by Fred Borders

Brothers John and Jim Ross live at Startleigh, and each owns a car.

From Startleigh a road runs east by north to Farleigh, and another goes east to Nearleigh. A third road joins Nearleigh to Farleigh.

At 9 a.m. one day John started to go round the 3 roads travelling anti-clockwise, and Jim started at the same moment to do the circuit in the opposite direction. Each kept his speed constant throughout.

They first passed each other 4 miles from Nearleigh on the road to Farleigh. The next passing point was on the road from Farleigh to Startleigh, twice as far from Farleigh as from Startleigh. Finally they met at midday 4 miles from Nearleigh and 20 miles east of Startleigh.

What were the distances between the villages and the speed of the cars?

NOW TURN TO PAGE 29 FOR THE ANSWERS

Too many ghosts

continued from page 18

by yourself, until you got yourself shot at by that major fellow. . . . What is it that is puzzling you still?"

Hero said gloomily: "That confounded harp. I know how it could be done, except for one thing which is missing. I've hunted this damn place high and low—there's no second harp. It is almost impossible to hide a concert harp, or even chuck it into the river, without someone noticing—it takes two men to lift it."

Ellison grinned. "Robert Houdin performed the trick a hundred years ago with two harps; when the great Rajah Rham Singh did the illusion, we had neither a harpist nor a second harp," he said. "But one of our assistants wasn't too bad with the violin—it works just as well, you know."

Hero leaped to his feet. He remembered now what it was that had been missing from the music-room; it was the 'cello that had stood in the corner. . . .

SUDDENLY Ellison looked at the end of his cigar with great suspicion, sniffing at it. He drew in smoke until the end glowed, then sniffed again, shaking his head.

Hero, too, was sniffing. Some execrable stench seemed suddenly to have invaded the room.

He wrenched the door open and went out with Ellison at his heels. The stink filled the corridor—there was more of it and it was more noxious. From the west wing there came the distant sound of Lockerie's voice bawling: "Hero! Hero! Where are you?"

Hero shouted: "Here, Sir Richard—coming," and ran toward the west wing. Half-way there he encountered the baronet, sheet white and dishevelled.

"For God's sake, Hero," he cried, "come at once—something ghastly has happened!"

Hero felt his heart sink within him. "Susan!"

"No, no—Beth."

Other cries arose: the voice of Lord Paradine shouting: "What the devil is that stink?" And then the agonized scream of a woman.

Doors were opening. Susan appeared in a dressing-gown . . . Meg . . . somehow Cousin Freddie was there, too. They went pounding down the hall at Sir Richard's heels until they came to Beth's room. They crowded inside.

Stretched out on the bed, still as death, lay a nun in black muslin habit, black hood with white starched lining. There was no mistaking the pale face and the figure within the cowl and the habit—it was Beth Paradine. She lay still as in sleep, unconsciousness, or death. On the table by her bed was a glass with still some milk in the bottom. Beside it was a bottle of sleeping tablets.

Sir Richard fell on his knees by the bed in a frenzy of anguish, holding her, shaking her, calling to her: "Beth, Beth, oh why did you do it? Is she dead, Hero? For God's sake, someone, get a doctor!"

Lady Paradine, too, was on her knees at her daughter's side, distraught and frightened, calling to her: "My baby! My baby!" she moaned; and then cried: "She was upset by what happened and said she was going to take a sleeping pill. Isobel brought her some hot milk—my child has killed herself—why, oh, why. . . ."

Cousin Freddie, his fat face flushed and perspiring, said: "My God—so it was Beth who was the nun all the time!"

The implication of his words reached everyone in the room and reduced them to silence.

WITH his thoughts in a turmoil, Hero went to the bed. He picked up the glass, sniffed it, tasted the milk, knelt and put his ear to Beth's breast, where the heart was still faintly fluttering. He sniffed at her lips and breath, opened the eyelids and looked into the unseeing eyes, and said sharply: "Mark—call Doctor Winters at once! Meg—get some hot coffee going!"

Sir Richard's head was shaking from side to side, and he was saying: "My Beth the nun? But how could she be when we were together that night?"

Hero went over to him, took him by the shoulders and shook him and said: "Pull yourself together, man. What night? When? Where?"

"The last time the nun was seen and the harp played. I found her in the library alone—terrified. I took her in my arms. . . . She had tried to follow the nun. That was when—when we knew we loved each other. We were still there when the harp began to play."

Hero saw his mistake then, and the consequences of it, and groaned aloud. "What a fool I've been! Why didn't I see; why didn't I know?"

For from the moment that Beth had found her way into Richard Lockerie's arms, Susan Marshall had been as safe as though she had been in her own home. The hatred that had communicated itself to Mrs. Taylor had transfered itself to Beth Paradine.

The nun's habit lay empty in a crumpled heap upon the floor. Held upright in the grip of Dr. Winters and Mark Paradine, Beth, clad in slippers and dressing-gown, was being walked up and down the length of the room. Her eyes were still glazed, her mouth vacuous, but locomotion had returned—she was moving her limbs of her own volition.

Hero, with Meg, stood watching her narrowly. Meg asked of her stepbrother: "Sandro, do you know who—what has happened?"

Hero nodded grimly. "I think I do." And then said: "She's had an overdose of barbiturate," and pointed in the direction of the table on which the two-thirds-empty glass and the bottle were still standing.

Sir Richard was still badly bewildered. "Why did she do it?" he groaned. "We were happy. We had found one another. Had I not come to her room to see that she was all right, she would be dead by now."

HERO said: "Have some faith, man. She didn't. Look at that bottle—it is almost full. She took a sleeping tablet, at the most two, then she drank her milk. The overdose had been dissolved in it already. Afterwards, when she became unconscious, that thing was put on her."

Sir Richard cried: "Then you mean she wasn't the nun at all, Hero?"

"Certainly not!" Hero snapped. "How could she be, man, when she was in your arms the night the harp played? Harp and nun are inseparable, and always have been."

Cousin Freddie suddenly raised his head and large nose, and sniffed. "I say," he said, "that frightful stink—it's worse!"

Now that Beth's crisis had passed and it was clear that she would recover, they were all again made aware of the horrid, mephitic stench through the house.

Susan Marshall's nerves gave way. She sat down upon a chair suddenly, white-faced, and asked: "Are we then

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GILBERT HARDING

Thanks, cranks

NOT long ago I read an article headed, "Are We Going Crackers?" There certainly has been an outbreak of odd behaviour lately.

Walkers, led by Dr. Barbara Moore, have pounded mile after mile up and down Britain. Some students set up a Bath to London record—by bath. A young man crossed in love rode a penny-farthing eighty-five miles to London—"to restore confidence" in himself. Another young man travelled the entire London underground system in just under eighteen hours.

Was it all pointless? It is too easy to deride those who do what we think are peculiar and useless things. For it all depends on what you mean by useless.

Oafs and fools

Among the people who think that Dr. Moore was wasting her time are hundreds who are quite prepared to suffer the most uncomfortable conditions to watch footballers or cricketers, who were once described as "muddied oafs and flannelled fools."

Thousands of people—and I am one of them—have no enthusiasm whatever for motor racing. But though I hate the smell, the noise and the danger, I do not condemn it. Its value to the car industry is enormous.

On television not long ago the Rev. Philip Francis calmly explained that he did not believe that the sun was hot. The sun, he says, is not a mass of flaming gases. It is a dead world, like ours, which produces heat by acting on the earth's atmosphere electrically.

'Dangerous' men

I think his conclusions are wrong, but he was certainly right to question an established belief. Where should we be without inquisitive eccentrics? What progress would have been made without the "fools" who thought they could find better ways of doing things? We should still be waiting for someone to invent the wheel.

The fact is, we owe an enormous amount to people who were regarded as dotty or dangerous by their contemporaries.

Galileo got into trouble by saying that the earth was round. And Jules Verne's idea of an underwater boat was received with amusement and incredulity—but less than a hundred years later an atomic submarine sailed under the North Pole.

Michael Faraday, who discovered the principle of the dynamo, satisfied a woman's curiosity about his work by showing her an electric spark. "What use is that?" she asked. "What use is a new-born baby?" he replied.

Nobody today doubts the usefulness of an umbrella. In fact, in some city offices a man who does not carry one is something of an odd fellow.

But in 1730, when Jonas Hanway became the first man to carry an umbrella in London, he was shouted at and pelted with stones, refuse and dead cats. It was thirty years before umbrellas were generally accepted.

You might think that "cranks" have been proved right often enough for us to have learned our lesson and to take them more seriously. But no. The man who invented the Hovercraft worked for years without support. So did the inventor of the jet engine.

Always wrong

I have become highly suspicious of public opinion on new ideas and developments. It is almost inevitably wrong.

Many things which were almost unheard of when I was a child—cars, electric light, central heating, air travel, radio, television—are now taken for granted. And so they should be.

I have no time for the elderly who complain that youngsters today expect too much. In fact, they ought to expect a good deal more.

But let them remember what they owe to the "cranks," to the people who had the courage of their convictions, however crazy their notions seemed to others.

As for me, when I look at my increasing waistline and complain about shortness of breath and lack of energy, I sometimes wish that Dr. Moore would tell me the secret of walking.

Not all the way from Edinburgh to London; Hyde Park to Hampstead would be quite far enough for me. THE END

Too many ghosts

continued from previous page

really haunted, Alex?" And horror seemed to return to the room.

"No," Hero replied, so sharply that it was almost like a slap designed to quell the approaching hysteria.

He looked straight at the physician. "Doctor Winters," he said, "have you prescribed tincture of valerian for anyone here recently?"

Dr. Winters looked at Hero, frowning for a moment, and then replied: "Why of course—several days ago I took a bottle of it up to Mrs. Spendley-Carter. I still use it as a sedative." His face suddenly lit up as he cried: "By jove, that's what it is! Why the devil is it spread all over the house?"

IT was Hero who was pale and sweating now, for he had remembered the last part of Mrs. Taylor's warning.

At that moment, and for the last time, the handless harp of Paradine Hall tinkled the tune of "My Bonnie Dear."

Dear God—let me be in time, Hero prayed, and ran from the room.

He went pelting along the corridor and down the narrow inside staircase that led to the floor below. He did not even pause as he ran past the door of the music-room from behind which the ghostly strains of the harp were sounding; he knew there would be no one in the room, and that the harp strings would be vibrating.

His mind was trying to place how much of the song had already been played, and at the same time trying to count the bars that yet remained.

When that song for the last time would be ended, so, too, would Paradine Hall, and the Lord only knew how many of its people along with it.

Ought he to have remained first to get those above to a place of safety? It was too late now. He had gambled on one last desperate attempt to stem disaster. Now he was momentarily confused.

REPUTATION—3

The reputation of a man is like a shadow — gigantic when it precedes him, and pygmy in its proportions when it follows.

Talleyrand

AND then, from down one of the darkened passages came those final strains:

And now thou'rt cold and laid upon thy bier—
Goodbye my bonnie, goodbye my bonnie dear.

And thereafter silence.

"Lord God," Hero cried aloud, "I'm too late!"

Nevertheless he hurled himself down the dark corridor and crashed at the storeroom door, cursing helplessly as it held.

But on the second attempt it gave way inward, and he burst in amid the almost overwhelmingly powerful fumes of the petrol that had been poured over a huge piled-up mass of paper, old rags and wood kindling. A paraffin lantern was burning nearby.

OVER in a corner that Hero knew was directly beneath the golden concert harp in the music-room on the floor above, sat Isobel Paradine. There was a 'cello held between her legs, with a curious contraption—a thin rod of firwood—attached to the sounding board and which ascended to the ceiling and vanished there. The bow of the instrument lay on the floor at her feet.

As Hero hurled himself through the door, Isobel made an attempt to reach for and upset the hot, glowing lantern. But Hero saw that her movements were slowed as of one who was drugged.

Hero seized the lantern, ran from the room, and extinguished it. Then he returned and switched on the single electric light bulb overhead. Isobel, overcome by the fumes, had slid to the ground and was lying face to the floor, her head close to the pile of inflammables. The silver-white of her hair seemed almost like a flame creeping close in one last desperate attempt to lick at the pyre and set off what was to have been the immolation of them all. . . .

NEXT day there were two departures from Paradine Hall—one so early that nobody was about to witness it.

Shortly after sun-up, a tall, silver-haired woman carrying a suitcase in each hand walked from the Hall to the garages, where she deposited the bags in the small car and got in herself. She started the engine, drove down the long, broad avenue of trees and out through the gates without a single backward glance.

The other departure was attended by Alexander Hero, there being still some unfinished business. He had several parcels with him.

The Wilsons were leaving in their own car. The major was sitting in the driver's seat attending his wife, who was still making her farewells in the Hall.

Hero opened the door of the car and climbed in beside him. "You know what's in this, of course," he said, handing one of the packages over to the major. "It's your gun."

WITH a brief nod, the major said: "I wondered when you were going to return my property."

Hero said: "I thought you might like this, too, as a souvenir."

The paper was loose as he handed the parcel over, and the major could see

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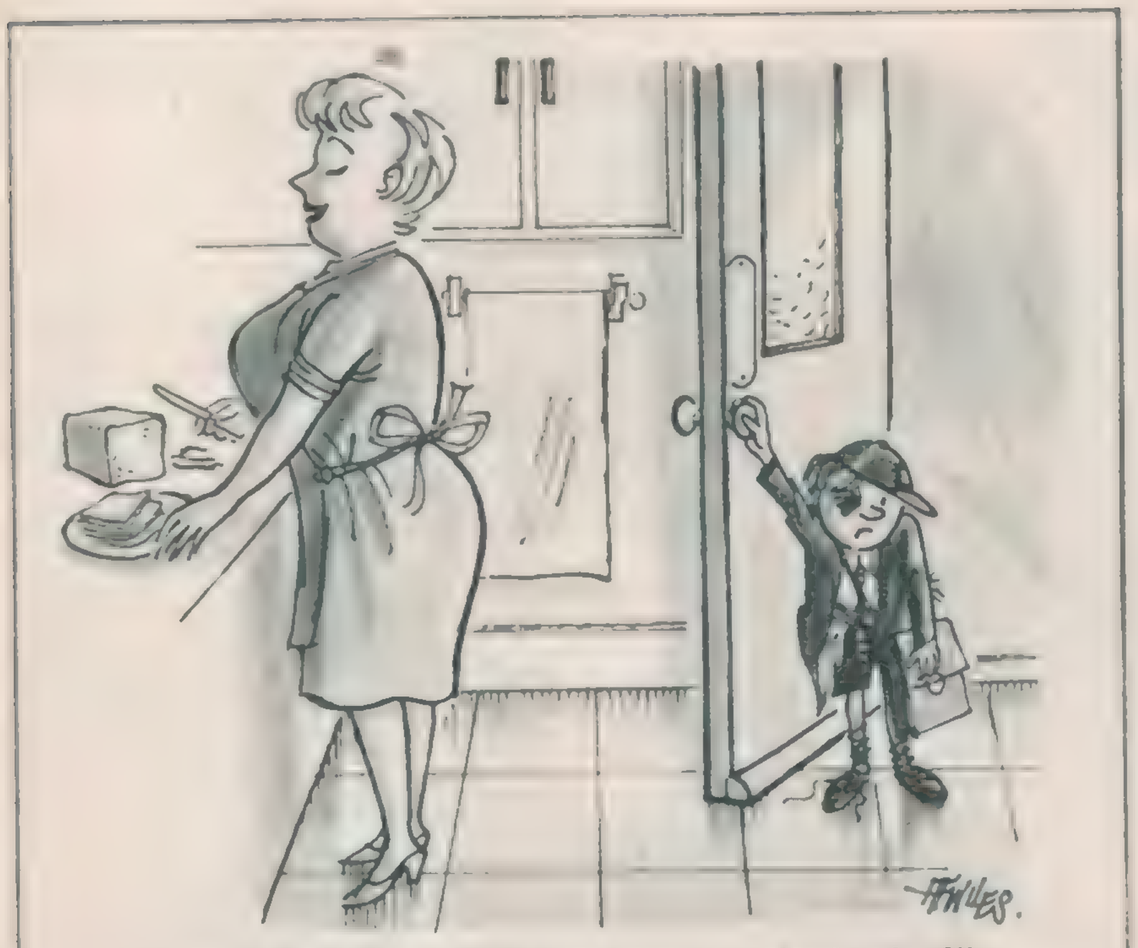
THE BURNING EYE by



"And what did my little man learn at school today?"

what was inside; it was the gas mask.

Hero said: "I telephoned London this morning, and found that you did a magician act at troop shows during the war."

The major had gone quite pale.

"You'd have swung, Major," Hero said cheerfully. "You've had a *very* narrow escape. Perhaps it will teach you not to jump to conclusions in the future—Mrs. Wilson was telling the truth that night." He opened the door.

The major looked at him and said: "Not much point in our shaking hands, is there, Hero?"

Hero said: "None whatsoever, Major," and got out. . . .

LATER that morning they were all collected in the library of the west wing, at Hero's request. There were Lord and Lady Paradine, Mark and Susan Marshall, Sir Richard Lockerie and Beth, Cousin Freddie, and Meg.

"Damn your impertinence, sir!" roared Lord Paradine. "How dared you take it upon yourself to let her get away?"

When Hero had quietly revealed what he had come upon in the cellar—the holocaust that he had been able to avert, and Isobel's subsequent departure—it had left them still more shaken. But Lord Paradine was stunned, humiliated, bewildered, and genuinely outraged as well. His round face crimson with choler, he shouted: "Well, explain yourself!"

Hero replied gently enough: "She was your sister, sir."

But Paradine's rage only grew the more towering. "Damn and blast!" he raved. "The would-be murderess of my daughter, and an arsonist—you'll have to answer to the authorities!"

Hero said quietly: "I should like you to remember, Lord Paradine, that I am neither a police detective nor a magistrate. You called me in because you were troubled by what seemed to be hauntings. I undertook to eliminate them. I have done so."

His sharpness and incisiveness had the effect of cooling Lord Paradine's anger. He was now ashamed of his temper, but not ashamed to say so. He said: "Sorry, Hero. Perhaps you're right."

But it was Cousin Freddie who said: "Oh, is that so—what about the jolly old nún? I mean, the real ghost."

Hero had had enough of Cousin Freddie, too. He said: "There was no nun from the very beginning."

"What's that?" Lord Paradine protested. "No nun? Why, it's written down in a book, sir. Can you substantiate your opinion?"

HERO said: "Certainly I can. The story of a nun is supposed to have taken place about 1564, when Philip Paradine was approximately thirty years of age. Her name was supposed to have been Sister Rose, and that of her peasant lover, from whom the wicked Philip filched her, Thomas Drew. But records show that Wytrim Priory burned down in 1539, and was never rebuilt. So Philip Paradine accomplished her seduction at the ripe old age of five."

Mark Paradine said: "But the story of the harp?"

"Pure piffle," Hero replied. "Sister

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Too many ghosts

continued from previous page

Rose wouldn't have been able to play any harp at all—farm girls weren't taught music in those days."

Beth, still pale after her experience, said: "But if there was never any Sister Rose, then. . . ."

"That is exactly the conclusion to which I was forced," Hero said. "Someone was up to some very unpleasant tricks. That person was Miss Isobel."

Lord Paradine said: "But why she, in heaven's name? Have you any idea?"

SIR RICHARD put in his word slightly pompously. "We ought to know, Hero," he said.

"Very well then," Hero said, addressing Sir Richard directly. "Isobel herself told me the story, and it is both simple and tragic. For all her life, ever since she was a little girl, she has been in love with you." He looked at Sir Richard. "But of course it was self-delusion . . . the first blow that fell upon her was when you returned from France at the end of the war with a French wife."

There was a kind of gasp from Beth. "Oh, poor Aunt Isobel!" she said, which caused Lord Paradine to look at his daughter curiously, and Sir Richard not to look at her at all.

Hero nodded. "Yes. But worse was to follow, for in more recent times Isobel suffered a triple catastrophe: the death of her adored father, who in a sense replaced Sir Richard; the transformation of his and her passionately cherished ancestral home into a sort of hotel; and evidence that Sir Richard, now a widower, with a nine-year-old son, had fallen in love with the American girl who was visiting Paradine Hall."

HERO drew on his pipe. Then he went on: "Isobel hated the country club, for it went against everything her father had stood for. The opportunity arrived for her to rid herself of the rivalry of Susan Marshall, and at the same time destroy the club.

The long sigh that came from Hero's listeners was almost in unison. Lady Paradine whispered: "I knew it. I knew it. She always hated us."

"But then," Hero asserted, "there were some things that Isobel did not know either, one of them being what manner of girl Miss Marshall is, and that she doesn't frighten easily; and another that Sir Richard was not in love with Miss Marshall at all, and never was—on the contrary, he was and had for some time been deeply in love with Isobel's niece Elizabeth."

There was stir enough at this. Sir Richard nodded his head and placed his hand over Beth's that was resting on his arm.

"The haunting of Paradine Hall," Hero continued, "began almost three weeks ago with what must have approximated genuine paranormal manifestations—the upheaval in Isobel's room, which I identified earlier for you as resulting from the underground watercourses activated by abnormally high tides.

"There is no question but that this cause was known to Isobel. In fact, she told me so. Next morning she consulted the tide tables and noted the indication of the unusually high tide. At the same time she noted that a repetition of this tide was due.

"It was the toppling of her father's picture from the wall that triggered the train of thought. When you all burst into her room, and she saw the superstitious horror on your faces, she knew that she was possessed of the weapon she needed to drive Susan Marshall from the Hall and to destroy the country club. She would use the fear of the supernatural—the legendary nun would once more be seen at Paradine Hall."

Susan Marshall suddenly drew in her breath. "But that awful hand," she whispered.

"Yes," Hero said, "Isobel used a rubber glove filled with ice and water—an old fake spiritualist trick. I am sorry I had to experiment, Susan—it was the only way I could be sure."

"Oh," said Susan, and squirmed slightly, but then remembered something. "But you—you were afraid there might be a second time. . . "

Hero shuddered inwardly, too, for he was thinking of the splotch of acid on the floor outside Susan's door. He replied: "I was afraid that the second time the contents of the glove might not have been so harmless—you are very beautiful, you know."

There was silence for a time. Then Hero went on: "Her attacks upon Susan Marshall were only attempts to get a potential rival out of the way. But once she became aware that Susan was not her rival, and that Beth and Sir Richard had acknowledged their love for one another, jealousy became mania. It happened on the night that Sir Richard came upon Beth in the library. There was a witness to that scene."

"Great heavens!" cried Sir Richard. "In the same room?"

"Yes," Hero replied, "Isobel was there in the shadows in the nun's habit in which she used to glide about the Hall. From that moment on, the situation changed and became deadly."

AFTER a moment of heavy silence, Mark Paradine said: "But all the rest, sir—the harp, and the candles going out, the rabbit on Susan's plate, and the nun in the minstrels' gallery. That wasn't Aunt Isobel, because she was at the table with us when we all saw it."

Hero replied: "You all saw the nun because you had been conditioned to see her. Isobel had arranged the drapes in the minstrels' gallery beforehand. It then needed the light of only one or two candles to complete the illusion—that's why all the others had to go out."

"But how did they go out?" queried Sir Richard.

"Oh, that was easy," Hero said. "Heat up a skewer and run it through a set of candles in the centre half-way down, and you destroy the wick. When the flame reaches the break in the wick, out it goes."

Mark Paradine asked: "But how could Aunt Isobel do this without one of us finding her out?"

Hero said: "Isobel was the one person who could—she knew the house as did no one else, probably even including several secret passages which enabled her to appear and disappear. She was mechanically inclined, handy with tools and effected all kinds of small repairs

MAN ABOUT THE HOUSE

"Then when *you* want the armchair you just slip it quietly out, see?"

Wort and the Angel boy

continued from page 22

to clear off this property," he hissed.

"Dot him on the nose, Mr. Wort!" said Angel's shrill voice.

Rodney spun round. "I'll dot you," he said, raising his stick.

I wrenched the stick from his hands and flung it away.

RODNEY lunged at me and I jumped back, appalled at what was happening. I had not been involved in a bout of fisticuffs for nearly twenty years. Before I could remonstrate with him, however, a bony fist crashed against my ear. I struck out wildly. Rodney bit me again on the head and then, in some extraordinary manner, tripped over his mackintosh and struck his nose against my elbow. He sat down hard on the muddy ground and fumbled dazedly for a handkerchief to staunch the slight trickle of blood.

I felt my elbow tenderly, noticing suddenly that the boys were cheering in a most partisan and unseemly fashion.

"Jolly good show, sir!"

"I say, will you teach me that elbow punch, sir?"

Rodney looked up at me balefully. "I'll sue you for assault," he said.

"You'll do nothing of the kind!" said a new voice hotly. "You tried to strike Jonathan, you nauseating bully, and got what you deserved."

I looked round and saw that Vanessa had arrived among us on the back of an immense brown horse.

"Golly, sis, what are you doing here?" Angel said. "Did you see old—Mr. Wort sock him?"

Vanessa dismounted gracefully and went over to Rodney.

"I think you'd better have this back," she said, putting something into his hand. It had the sparkle of diamonds.

"What? Oh, I say, look here——"

Vanessa said sweetly: "I'm glad I've seen you in your native surroundings. It's been so instructive that I shall be taking the first train home."

"But Vanessa, you don't understand——"

"Oh, but I do. I understand that you're a mean, bad-tempered bore. Ask them to pack my things, please, when you get back to the house."

She turned her back, dismissing him, and came across to me. Rodney lingered for a moment, then slouched away.

Vanessa said: "Mr. Wort, I really can't thank you enough." It sounded like an echo of a dream.

"Please," I protested uncomfortably. "It was nothing." And then, becoming aware of the wide-eyed, attentive audience gathered round us, I sent the boys scurrying off on a search for dry wood. "We might as well cook our lunch while we're here," I said.

When we were alone, there was a short silence. Then Vanessa said: "I don't suppose I shall see you again."

"No, I'm afraid not," I said sadly.

She sighed. "Are you spending all your holiday up here?"

I shook my head. "I'm off to Italy next week."

"Goodness! Whereabouts in Italy?"

"Fano."

"But that's astonishing!" Her eyes sparkled suddenly. "I'm going to Pesaro next week to stay with friends."

"You're not!"

"I am."

I looked at her joyfully. "Then I shall be practically next door to you."

"I know." She smiled. "So I shall see you again, shan't I?"

"You'll never get rid of me."

"Perhaps I shan't want to."

The boys came back just then. Even in my present exultant and rather bemused mood, it struck me how remarkably obedient and anxious to please they had become.

"I say, sir, we haven't any paper to light the fire with," Angel said.

I felt in my hip pocket and drew out *The Book Of Power*. "This should do the trick," I said starting to tear it up. . . .

SONOROUSLY the school bell sounded but September Wort remained standing on the steps, looking out over the quadrangle with a reminiscent smile.

You mean the book changed your personality, September?

What? Good heavens, no, the book had nothing to do with it, my dear fellow. No, it was that holiday in Italy. That made a difference to me. . . .

And still with that faint smile on his face, September Wort adjusted his gown and walked up the steps into the school.

THE END

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about the house—it was easy for her to diddle the lights, lock and unlock doors, remove bolts, create noises in the plumbing. And it was just as easy for her to upset Susan's room before the exorcism, and chuck Mrs. Spendley-Carter's valerian in the hot-water system to cover the smell of petrol."

SUSAN MARSHALL was thinking hard. She said: "But she was only *one* ghost—what about the chair that moved and the rabbit on my plate?"

"Oh," Hero said, "that was little Noreen Spendley-Carter, trying to upset her mother. The rabbit reached your plate by mistake."

Hero tapped out his pipe, and said: "And that just about winds up the ghosts of Paradine Hall, with the exception of the nastiness in the conservatory, the details of which I will not bore you with—except to say you were victims of a stage illusion designed to embarrass me."

Mark Paradine said: "Would you tell us whether there was anything genuinely—what do you call it?—paranormal in these occurrences?"

Hero did not reply immediately. At last he said: "Very well. A few days ago I had three warnings of events to come: that I was in some personal danger; that a great wickedness was to be perpetrated upon a member of the household—a young girl; and that an attempt was to be made to burn down Paradine Hall."

Sir Richard asked: "From whom did you receive these warnings?"

"From Mrs. Geraldine Taylor."

"What?" The cry that went up was almost a shout in unison.

Hero said: "One afternoon Mrs. Taylor laid out the fortune-telling game of Tarot for me. In the midst of the usual rubbishy fortune-telling stuff, something strange occurred and it was during this time that I received the warnings. The mistake I made was in believing that the one whose life was threatened was Susan and not Beth."

Lord Paradine gave a short snort of derision. "Well now, if you ask me," he said, "that's utter damn nonsense!"

Hero sighed and said: "I didn't ask, sir, but if I did, it would be to inquire into the human perversity willing to swallow the most incredible fake spooks and spirits, and refusing to credit the one genuinely paranormal manifestation that took place here. The only field where if you ask me: 'How was it done?' I must reply to you: 'I don't know'—the field of transference of thought. It happens. God knows, there was enough wickedness adrift here. Mrs. Taylor tuned in on some of it."

LORD PARADINE flushed momentarily. He was not certain whether or not he had been rebuked; and then decided, since he did not understand it, that he had not. "Ah-hm, Hero! Well! Whatever I think, undoubtedly you've kept your end of the bargain. I will be sending you your cheque."

Sir Richard, who was looking embarrassed, said: "Damn fine job, Hero." He was sincere. Nevertheless it sounded faintly patronizing.

Lord Paradine continued: "Though, mind you, Hero, I'm not saying I approve of your somewhat high-handed action in permitting my sister to depart."

"Oh, as to that," Hero said, pulling out the words against the immense fatigue he felt: "I can give you your pound of flesh. She will not go unpunished—she has committed herself to life imprisonment in France, where she has gone to enter the strictest of Closed Orders. For the rest of her days she will wear the habit of the nun, and never speak again, except to pray."

Now they were on the road home, the Lady Margaret Callandar and Alexander Hero, driving to London.

Meg said tentatively and delicately: "What's wrong, Sandro? You did a good job, but you're disappointed."

"People," he cried, unburdening himself, "the smugness and intolerance of them! How can a ghost—if we ever do encounter one—be anything but wicked, since it first had to be human?"

She leaned her temple against his shoulder. After a moment she said: "Sandro, were you hurt on this job?"

"One always is a little on this sort of case. You know better than anyone how I feel about people who play at spooks."

"No—I mean you inside. Which one of those girls were you in love with a little?"

Hero said somewhat grimly: "Not Vivyan Wilson, I can promise you."

Meg smiled her funny little smile and said: "Do you know, of all those there, she was almost the most normal. She was simple and direct. Well—and Isobel?"

Hero smiled and said: "Much as I admire ruthless women, I don't want to be the one that's eaten." He fell silent for a moment, and then concluded: "I suppose in a way it was Susan."

"And now she's to marry Mark. How do you feel about that?"

Hero slowed down through a thirty-mile zone and reflected. "Oh, I think they'll do well," he said. "They both have character. I suspect that, once she's married to him, she will outdynast even Isobel—Americans do when they marry into old families."

Meg said: "I meant in relation to you."

Hero turned his head for a moment to smile at her and say: "Oh, I'm all right," and Meg could see that quite suddenly he really was.

"We'll certainly have to change this wallpaper . . ."

MEG said: "What happened afterwards—I mean, what spoiled it between you? She was a dear, you know—a fine and splendid girl."

"I think we got to dislike one another's minds," Hero said. "Can you see that? You know mine—nasty and suspicious, particularly during business hours. She started to dislike me for not trusting her, and I was disillusioned with her for not understanding that I couldn't."

Meg sighed again and said sardonically: "You're going to make someone a wonderful husband one day, Sandro."

Hero said piously: "God forbid that I should ever." And then: "Lean your head harder, Meg—it feels so good."

His stepsister sighed again, snuggled a bit deeper in the seat and leaned harder. She was a sensible, practical girl and not given to idle romancing or useless sighing and mooning.

ONE day, perhaps, he would know how dearly she loved him. In the meantime, somehow she had managed again to bring him through another jungle filled with predatory females to emerge reasonably unscathed.

She felt pleased with herself, and happier than she had been in a long time.

THE END

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"Too Many Ghosts," by Paul Gallico, will be published by Michael Joseph as a novel this spring. Price 15s.

The lost sheep

continued from page 6

another chap that day, old Hopkin had, to be on the gate for Ianto.

But old Hopkin wasn't clever enough either to see what Mrs. Hughes's reaction would be. A shock to him, it must have been, when he found out.

I DIDN'T get at the truth of it all until one evening when Ianto had been married and down at the Schooner three months or so.

It was Blodwen's and my wedding anniversary, as a matter of fact—our twenty-first. They'd given a little party for us down at the pub.

Blodwen and I left about ten and strolled home arm in arm.

"Well," I said, "they seem to be getting on all right, those two. I still don't understand, though, why Ianto bought that ring at all."

Blodwin sighed. "So romantic."

"Ianto's not romantic," I said. "And not bright enough either to see how it would work out."

Blodwen giggled. She'd had a good evening. "He bought it because I told him to," she said.

"*You* told him to?"

Blodwen giggled again. "I promised Ianto never to tell anybody," she said, "but you're not anybody, are you?"

"But why?" I said.

Blodwen tugged at my arm. "Come on," she said. "We'll never get home."

"Wait a minute." I stopped her again. "Just get to the bottom of this, we will. It was you, too, I suppose, who told old Hopkin Ianto would be bringing the ring in that trip?"

"No," Blodwen said. "I told Hilda." She giggled once more. "Same thing."

AND it was. Hilda Pritchard had never forgiven Blodwen for grabbing me from her. A nasty, spiteful old devil she'd become, too, as I've said before. You could rely on her to get her own back on Blodwen, if she had the chance. And Ianto was Blodwen's brother. So telling Hilda was as good as telling old Hopkin himself. She'd make sure the news got to him.

All at once, I could see just what my old Blod had been up to.

"Why," I said. "You little. . . ."

"Worked out all right, hasn't it?" Blodwen said. "Or would you rather have that Will Hopkin serving your beer?" She tugged at my arm again. "If we keep stopping like this, people will think we're a courting couple."

There it is, then. Easy, if you know how. Clever, they are, women like Blodwen, at this match-making game. A man just doesn't stand a chance.

Not that, as she said, it didn't work out all right in Ianto's case. . . .

MY own case worked out all right, too. But I've only to look back to realize that, if old Blod hadn't happened to want me for herself, she might have taken it into her head to marry me off to Hilda Price. After all, Hilda was her best friend then. . . .

Hilda lives in the same street as we do, some distance away down the road, but still near enough for us to hear her shrieking at her poor old Dai, even with all the doors and windows shut.

When I add up all that I've had during the past twenty-one years, and what I might have had instead, and see how it all lay in the hollow of my dear old Blodwen's hand. . . .

I tell you, it gives me cold shudders just to think of it. THE END

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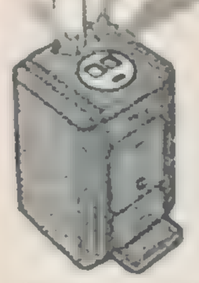

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Crocodile trader

continued from page 11

tightly around the crocodile's belly was the noose of a snare. "Say, this sure is a real rush-job. We've gotta get this fella trussed up and that snare off pronto."

The snare had bitten into the belly flesh and Jones yelped in dismay.

He issued a stream of orders. First we returned to camp, dumped our catch (earlier snares having produced three crocs) and, in compliance with orders and under Arthur's frantic exhortation, fetched reinforcements. The boat trip was done in record time, Arthur coaxing every inch of power from the outboard engine. He was possessed by a fear that the brute might break loose in our absence, or seriously injure itself.

Roping the jaws

The crocodile was still there on our return and, jumping ashore, Jones admonished us in nasal tones. "Hang on, fellas, whatever happens. This's historic. He sure's not gonner get away."

Dashing back to the boat Arthur produced rope and tackle and we prepared for work, but we had not bargained with Jones, who now produced his camera. Shots of film had to be taken, but the more shots we took the more excited became the boys, and this excitement was transmitted to the crocodile.

Eventually Jones was satisfied with his pictures and the job of roping the crocodile's jaws and body began. There were now twelve of us, but such was the strength of the brute that he threw us about like skittles. To add to our troubles Jones kept bawling encouragement and advice, interspersed with plaintive instructions to hold on at any price.

We got it to camp and unloaded, then, as next day was the day for our regular trip to Mambova, suggested that it be left trussed up all night. Jones howled in protest: "Leave the Biggest Crocodile in Captivity trussed up! Say, you guys sure are plain crazy. Leave history trussed up all night! I'll say this sonofabitch will be a sensation back home . . . an' you wanna leave it trussed up to die!"

That was that. Reluctantly we freed the brute and spent the remainder of the day wondering how we would ever parcel it up on the morrow.

Already we were bruised and aching in every limb. . . .

Hardly were we asleep before Jones was shouting to us to get a jerk on and start work. Soon every man in camp was in our stockade roping crocodiles.

Now for Big Boy

Roping crocodiles in a stockade is not very different from roping crocodiles anywhere else, but there is a difference and a nasty one. At the best of times there is little moving room. That day there was none. The place was packed tight with men and crocs. At each step our feet landed on a scaly back—and those crocs were loose, and had full use of their jaws.

Using a noose, we trussed and loaded the smaller types without mishap, keeping a wary eye on Big Boy as we worked. Once trussed, the crocs were loaded on to a sledge at the back of our jeep and all went smoothly. Soon all that remained was the Big Boy . . . and quite enough to remain.

Collaring it, we struggled and swore while the sun crept up the eastern sky. Instead of two men on the loose end of rope left over once the jaws had been secured, we had five, but as the brute jerked and twisted the rope ran through their fingers, burning flesh until the holders bleated in pain.

Each step was a major operation and, without Arthur's exhortations we would never have completed the job. Now, securely roped and blindfolded, the reptile was passive, but as we bent to lift it towards the jeep Mr. Crocodile decided to show us just what he could do.

Five boys from the African police detachment with us took the head, and others together with our own boys lined either side of the torso, but so large was the brute that their hands could barely meet underneath its body as, chanting noisily, they raised the reptile.

We were standing in eighteen inches of water and the cement bottom of the pool was slippery underfoot. A few convulsive contortions and we were scattered, all save the police boys, who hung on as they had been ordered.

The croc fell back into the water, and the police boys still hung on tenaciously, but once in water the brute soon shook free. As I clambered to my feet, I spotted that only one now remained.

The crocodile scuttled for the deep end of the pool, lashing its head from side to side to free itself. The police boy battled manfully, but his grip was broken and, being in deep water, he was not flung clear.

Nothing happened for a moment, then that evil head swung back with the force of a three-hundred-pound hammer and caught the boy on the side of the head. Without even a groan he collapsed and sank to the slimy bottom.

Before I had assimilated just what had happened Jones was in the water and had carried the boy to land. Poor devil!

There was a hole in his head big enough to stick a fist into. He looked a goner, and the other boys apparently shared my view.

Hospital dash

For they broke into the unearthly wailing of the death chant, an ululation of despair, blood-curdling in the extreme.

Jones quietened them with a gesture, then turned to us. "He's not dead, and sure must be gotten to hospital at Livingstone quick. Unload the jeep, place him in the back and get on your way.

"Take a driver-boy to bring me back the jeep. I'll stay here and have the catch at the river by the time you return from town."

A life was at stake, and now everything else was forgotten. Organizer Jones was at his best in such a situation. Orders came crisp and terse as rifle-shots.

The wounded boy was wrapped in blankets, then Jones bandaged the injury in a most professional manner. Without even bothering to light a cigarette Graham got behind the wheel and we were on our way.

The floods begin

We made the river without mishap, but as we drew up at the landing-stage we were met by another and greater shock. Our barge, which normally could scarcely be seen, was riding high above the bank. The floods had begun, and water lapped mere inches below the river bank.

Once above the bank level it would spread over the countryside in a flood-tide, enveloping our camp, our hoard of skins and the unprepared and unsuspecting Jones.

"And the Zambesi's Arthur's blind spot," groaned Graham. If we went back to warn Arthur the wounded man would die. If we went on, Arthur would never listen to the jeep-driver's warning . . . then Arthur would die.

'Suddenly our native boys broke into blood-chilling shrieks of despair . . . the unearthly wail of the death chant'

Whatever course we adopted someone would suffer. I crossed to take a look at the wounded policeman and, as I stood there he groaned. That decided me.

While Graham told the driver what to say when he returned to camp I scribbled Arthur an additional note of warning. He must pack immediately and start carting, not only the crocodiles, but kit to the landing-stage. This done the wounded boy was laid out on the bottom of the barge and we started off under full throttle for Mambova.

Mid-river had become as angry as the Pentland Firth, cross-currents lashed the waters into choppy waves, and these spewed aboard on every side. To add to our troubles debris was hurtling downstream at a terrific pace.

When we eventually carried the police boy into Livingstone Hospital, we told the superintendent what had happened, and added that Jones would submit the report usual in such circumstances as soon as he arrived down river.

The superintendent was a bit cagey about this until he realized that Jones was still marooned on the flat lands and that we were dashing back to his rescue. Then he shooed us from the door with the following words of comfort: "Water's threatening the Power Station. There's never been floods like these before."

"Will the boy make out?" I asked, settling behind the wheel of a truck for the return trip to Mambova.

The surgeon laughed: "Couldn't have been hit in a better place. The African's toughest in the head. Take my word for it, he'll be right as rain." These words proved true, but were of little solace to us as we skidded and slipped on the sodden road. Driving flat out, we hoped for the best.

What would be the position if Jones had not heeded our warnings? We could only pray that this time he had taken the warning seriously and was waiting packed and ready on the river bank.

The drive to Mambova was bad, but the trip up-river turned out to be pure hell. Waves broke over the bow in an endless succession.

Cross-currents buffeted us from side to side, and the river was now four times as wide as it had been, and becoming wider, and more powerful, each moment. Around the flat lands where our camp was pitched it would finally reach out to a width of over forty miles.

I glanced at my watch. We had been on the water four hours. Admittedly progress had been slow, still, by now we should have reached our destination. I shouted this view to Graham but he only waved impatiently and continued peering into the gathering darkness ahead.

Four hours! We *must* have passed the landing-stage!

Half an hour passed and I was once more considering suggesting that we turn back when, above the clamour of wind and water, I heard a shout and, next moment, made out Jones.

He was standing on the bank directly opposite, waving furiously and shouting at the top of his voice. In the uncertain light we had all but passed him.

"Looks as if he's got the breeze up at last," said Graham with satisfaction, as we edged towards the bank, shipping considerable water as we came broadside on to the current.

We expected commiseration; instead, we were greeted by: "My throat's sure sore yelling on you guys. I reckoned you were heading for Cairo. There's still a lot of stuff in camp, but the river's not rising. Let's load this lot pronto, then you get back in the jeep for the balance. Guess I'll get the catch and this lot to Mambova and collect you in the morning."

"Are you leaving us here in the flood?" I asked.

Only crocs matter . . .

"Sure, but cut the wailing. I'm leaving you the lake barge. It's still on the lake, I've taken the small boats only. Don't bleat now. You sure can get down in the lake barge if it's necessary, but it's not gonner be. The water's static. Not an inch has it risen all day."

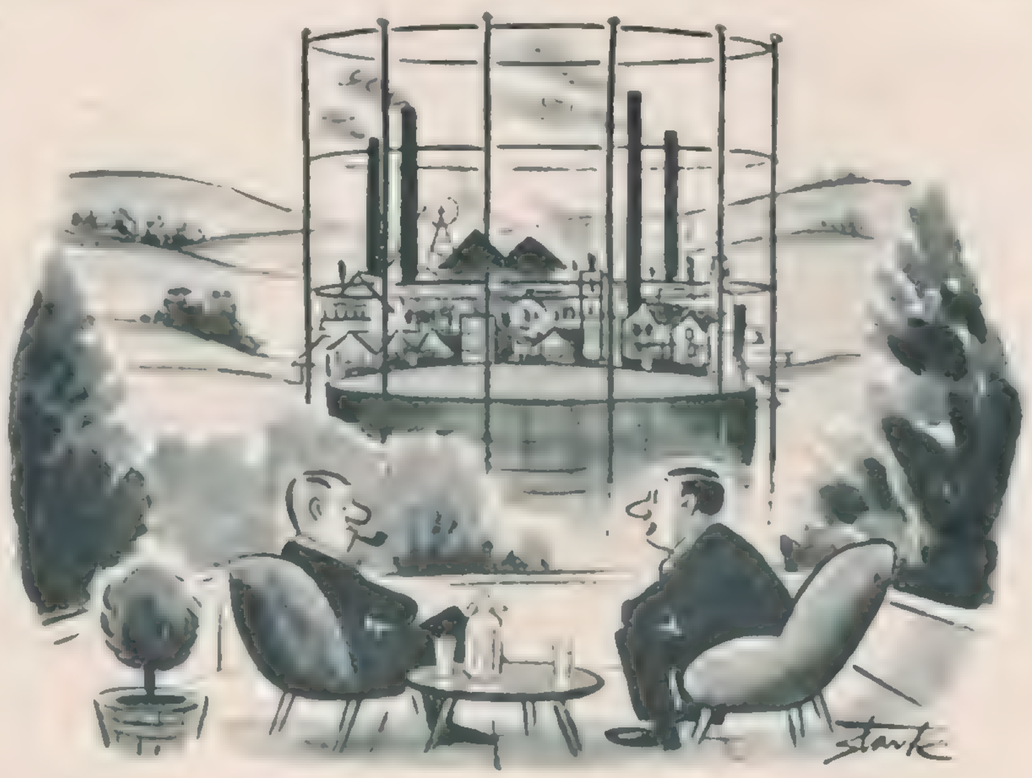
Seeing our mutinous looks he added consolingly: "I sure would have stayed myself, but I've just gotter see Big Fella safe to Mambova." Arthur was running true to form; his confounded crocodiles were the only thing that mattered.

Arguing was futile, and very aware that anything could happen to the river during the next four hours, we decided, having no option, to make the best of a bad job. Besides, being on our own would give us a chance to discover if our skins were still all right despite the floods.

Anxiously steering our boat through angry, rising waves, we reached our cache to find all but a few of the skins completely ruined. A fortune had been snatched from under our noses. Instead of eight hundred pounds we'd be lucky to get eighty.

We returned to camp in a mood of utter despair.

Soon everything was packed ready for an early start on the morrow and, once this was done, there was nothing left to



"It isn't so bad when the thing's full"

"Now, just before we start to mix . . . a few 'Don'ts'"

distract our minds, nothing to think about but abject failure; failure that might even cost us a trip to the States.

Slowly, next morning, we made our way towards the river, through pools of water and fast-running new-formed streams.

We looked out over the tempestuous waters. A great tree swung past, travelling fast and riding high on the water. Ploughing upstream against the storm, with vision obscured by rain and blown bow spume, what chance had Arthur of picking out such obstacles?

Snarled defiance

My eye fastened on moving trees, branches nodding and bobbing as if riding out a gale, yet there was not all that much wind. Suddenly I realized that these were floating islands, chunks of earth torn loose from the river banks by an irresistible pressure of water.

"He'll never make it. He hasn't a snowball's hope." Such statements were unusual from the irrepressible Graham.

Hour dragged after weary hour. Then came a cavernous, challenging roar. Swirling past on a floating island was a magnificent black-maned lion, one paw resting on its kill and blood dripping from its mouth as it paused in feeding to gaze at me with fearless tawny eyes while snarling defiance at the flood.

Something in me responded to that look and full-blooded roar, and brought me to my feet, thirsting for action. Very alive to the wailing boys I shouted: "Off-load the jeep, stack the kit handy for loading, and place the barge ready for launching. We'll give him another few minutes before starting on our own."

Fifteen minutes passed and we could hardly afford to wait any longer. The waters were rising, bent on our destruction. To hold on meant death. Reluctantly I moved towards the barge, then, for the last time, cocked my head and listened.

There *was* something. Frightened to voice my thoughts, I held up a hand for silence. Everybody stood as if carved from stone; heads tilted, listening.

It came again and clearer now, the chug, chug, chug, of a labouring engine. Seconds later, smothered in blown spume, the barge heaved into sight, turned and headed for the bank. We raised a ragged cheer in reply to Arthur's nonchalant salute.

"I sure guess I'm late," he said.

With Arthur back in command things went with a swing. Planks were laid from bank to barge, and the jeep was run aboard and placed well forward. The balance of kit was stacked amidships.

"We'll sure be lucky to hit Mambova before dark," Arthur commented. Certainly it would be dark long before we made Mambova, and should we miss Mambova. . . .

I shuddered, remembering the rapids.

World of water

We edged out into the turmoil of waters. Waves tossed us about so much that sometimes in the troughs between not even a tree top was visible, let alone the flooded bank. Graham and two Africans were in the bow while I, and a few more, watched the sides, striving to ward off debris thrown by cross-currents against the sides.

Night brought yet heavier rain, and with it a further decrease in visibility. Arthur eased back the throttle, but speed was something over which we now had no control. Time dragged, but the speed of the current was fantastic. Surely by now we had reached Mambova?

Soon we could just discern the bank, but all was vague and altered. Greedy waters had reclaimed mile upon mile of land. We were looking at a new world, a world we had never seen before. Fear spread like wild-fire through our crew.

This went on for some time then, quite suddenly, I had a feeling of impending disaster, an unaccountable but certain knowledge that we had come too far and that split seconds divided us from death in the pounding rapids. Scrambling into the stern I yelled to Jones to bring the boat round, or stop the engine.

"Say, Bill, if I cut this little engine, and we *have* come too far, we sure'll have had our chips."

"Bring her round then," I pleaded.

He waved a hand towards the fury astern. "Turn in this? For sure we'd turn turtle!"

I gripped his arm, the sense of urgency increasing with each passing second. "Do as I say, for Christ's sake," I yelled.

"Anything to oblige," Jones replied calmly. He cast an appraising eye astern. "I'll swing her upstream soon as ever there's a chance—open up and then switch off."

I sighed with relief as, judging things to a nicety, he coaxed the barge around, gave her full gun and, as soon as we

Answers to
Everybody's Puzzling
See page 23

FRED BORDERS'S BRAIN TEASER

The distances John travelled between each meeting place were as equal as his times. There were 3 meetings in 3 hours; therefore John had been travelling an hour when he first met Jim.

Now from Startleigh to Nearleigh is 24 miles, so John did 28 miles an hour. As John did a circuit plus 20 miles in 3 hours, a circuit must be 64 miles. John's last lap was one-third of Farleigh to Startleigh plus 20 miles, so one-third of Farleigh to Startleigh is 8 miles, and Farleigh to Startleigh is 24 miles, leaving 16 miles as the distance from Farleigh to Nearleigh.

Jim did two circuits less 20 miles in 3 hours, so his speed was 36 m.p.h.

QUIZZLE

Quotation: "Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small." (Longfellow).
Clue Down: Princess of the Netherlands.
Clues Across: (A) Patchouli; (B) Rouge; (C) Inhibit; (D) Nether; (E) Camomile; (F) Elysium; (G) Sofa; (H) Sargasso; (I) Old age; (J) Franciscan; (K) Tidings; (L) Hilo; (M) Ewe-lamb; (N) Norroy; (O) Eyelet; (P) Teetotum; (Q) Hush-money; (R) Egression; (S) Rider; (T) Luxuriance; (U) Aedile; (V) Nanny-goat; (W) Dustman; X) Stallion.

When I'm grown-up

and get married, I'll have ten children and then we'll be twelve. We'll need a lot of Hovis each week, but my mummy says it's well worth that little bit extra.

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Crocodile trader

continued from previous page

were travelling upstream at full speed, switched off the motor.

The engine spluttered to oblivion in the roar of angry waters. We were right on the edge of the rapids.

"Get her going! Get going!" I bellowed, but Jones was already busy on the engine. It coughed and spluttered. Even as my words hung on the air, the engine-beat quickened, gradually, deliberately. I held my breath as a shudder ran through the hull, then let it escape in a sigh of infinite relief as the barge gathered way and began to forge up against the current, defying Nyami-Nyami and every effort of his great Zambesi.

Victory chants

The Africans' wails of despair changed to victory chants. A few minutes later we spotted the Mambova entrance.

On the quay, flickering torches illuminated a solid mass of humanity awaiting our arrival. Wild cheering broke out as we edged in and tied up.

It took us a few minutes to learn the reason for this acclamation. The crowd had heard our engine grow in volume then recede to die away beyond the entrance channel, and had concluded that we had been carried over the rapids. Now their joy was only exceeded by our own. At such times words are totally inadequate; even Iron-Man Jones was visibly moved.

Within two days we had all our crocs safely packed in long narrow water tanks made of steel and covered with boards. At Livingstone Station we carefully fitted them into two large wagons on a train bound for the port of Beira in Portuguese East Africa.

As the long train puffed slowly south it halted at every siding and watering point so that we could run along and view our charges and refill their water-tanks.

We reached Bulawayo at last, and from there made the journey to Salisbury without incident. At Salisbury there was a long halt before the train left for Beira, and it was here that we had to pay our respects to the American consul and find out whether we had been granted entry to the States.

Graham was first to interview the consul and he passed through without trouble. One or two small debts had to be settled, and these Arthur fixed up on the spot. Then it was my turn, and I realized before entering the "presence" that my hopes were exceeding small.

Payments of income tax, and instalments on my car, were long overdue, and there were several other items.

My application was refused. Jones said gently: "Reckon you'll have to leave it until the next trip, Bill. I'll be back in September." He smiled. "And this time I'll start early and avoid the floods. Meantime, what about coming down to Beira and seeing us on our way?"

It was as if a sledge-hammer had hit me on the clock, but I managed to say: "Yes, perhaps that would be the best way out, and I'd like to see you off."

I spent the rest of the day sending off letters applying for crocodile shooting jobs. Jones reckoned that he would be back in September and Jones was a man of his word. Next time I'd be on the trip to the States, even if it meant working twenty-four hours a day in the meantime.

We were tired and hungry by the time Umtali was reached so, leaving a native constable to keep the milling onlookers away from our charges, we made a beeline for the station buffet, mixed grills and a wash and brush up.

Replete and satisfied, Jones paid the bill and we strolled back to the train.

There appeared to be an unusual amount of activity on the platform. "Surely we can't be pulling out yet?" queried Graham.

We had no idea what all the hullabaloo was about until, advancing ponderously towards us, we espied a thirteen-foot crocodile.

"Say! Guess I'll eat my hat if that ain't Foster Dulles," yelped the American, diving for our carriage to fetch his camera. The croc paused to blow in dragon-like fashion, a mannerism responsible for its name. Undoubtedly it was our charge. Graham lifted his hat and bowed, but the crocodile merely looked at him with glassy indifference and continued on its way.

Returning, Jones began to take shots, but now an outraged guard ran up. "Remove that animal, remove it at once. We can't have this sort of carry on. Get the brute locked up, then get the balance off the train. Had I come on shift farther up the line they'd all have been off by now," he spluttered importantly.

"Get them off the train? Say, fella, I'd have you know that these specimens are en route to the United States of America, and they're sure goin' there."

"Not on my train, they ain't," roared the guard. He was going to say more but halted, mouth agape. Foster Dulles had turned and was regarding him with a none-too-friendly eye.

Jones bridled. "Take it from me, fella, these crocs stay put," he grated.

"We can't enter foreign territory and start dropping live crocodiles all over the place. That could lead to an international incident," bleated the guard. A short, thick-set fellow, he obviously took life seriously.

"I'll say it *will* lead to an incident—if you remove these crocs," retorted Jones, adding under his breath: "I'd sure like to know how the brute broke loose, but we'd best catch it first."

We headed the reptile back towards the train and, when the guard again prepared to remonstrate, Jones took out his wallet and a note changed hands. The change in the official manner was instantaneous.

REPUTATION—4

There are two ways of establishing your reputation—to be praised by honest men, and to be abused by rogues.

C. C. Colton

'The Evil One'

That hurdle was overcome, but Foster Dulles was still at large. The brute had to be caught. A few coins produced willing helpers; by this time there were close on a thousand spectators, all standing well back, shouting advice and encouragement as we pounded after the elusive saurian.

Before being lassoed it had to be cornered, but it showed no inclination towards being cornered. This went on for quite a time, until the train engine attracted its attention. Purposefully it waddled towards the footplate for a closer scrutiny of this fire-breathing dragon. "Reckon it's found a long-lost cousin, and is trying to discover its sex," quipped Graham.

The driver, a small unshaven man with a bald head, took one look and dashed for the far side of his cab. "Hold it, fella," shouted Jones. Striding up to the inquisitive croc, he more or less patted its back as he continued: "Take it easy now, there sure ain't no harm in Foster Dulles."

Goggle-eyed, the driver looked from Jones to the crocodile. Jones looked pained. "Say, ain't you ever seen a live croc before?"

" 'Tis the Evil One himself," wailed the driver. He dropped on to the track and made off at speed.

The crocodile, after a cursory examination of the engine, decided that humans were more amenable and returned to the platform. This affinity towards man was not reciprocated, the crowd melted. The crocodile, making best use of the vacant spaces, defied our every endeavour to recapture it.

Finally we did corner it, truss it up carefully and get it back into the tank, discovering at the same time how it had managed to break free. It had merely arched its back, splintering the wooden planks to matchwood.

Our charges safely deposited in Beira, ready for loading, we had a night out. Jones was in top form, and no "coke" was consumed. I drowned my sorrows in best Portuguese wine, and a surfeit of prawns—a Beira delicacy.

Lap of luxury

Next morning the crocodiles were swung aboard a waiting mixed cargo-and-passenger vessel and later I followed Jones and Graham aboard to have a look at their accommodation. It was a stupid thing to do. Disappointment returned a hundred-fold. They were to live in the lap of luxury, with nothing to do but eat and sleep.

"Blast and damn all income tax departments," I cried from the soul.

Jones grinned. "Okay, Bill, do just that, but remember September."

Some weeks after returning to Rhodesia I received the following cable: *Family stood up well to trip. Great folks here. It sure is a million dollar country.*

I feel that the last sentence was unnecessary. Why rub it in?

I knew only too well what I was missing.

THE END

© *Rory Macaulay, 1960*

"Crocodile Trader" will be published as a book by Jarrolds on March 21 at 18s.

THE LESLIE STOKES CROSSWORD (No. 12)

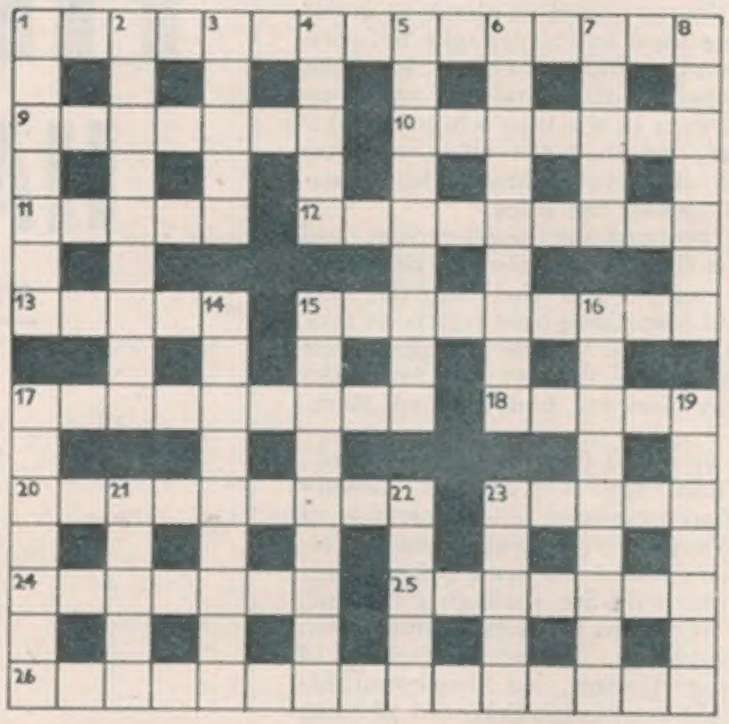
Prizes of one-guinea Book Tokens will be given for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries must be marked "Crossword No. 12" on the envelope and must be posted to reach this office (John Bull, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1) by Tuesday, February 2. No correspondence can be entered into about this puzzle.

ACROSS

1. Little man's firm? Doesn't concern us, anyway. (7, 8)
9. Great personage, yet looks a simpleton at first. (7)
10. Snow in the underworld. (7)
11. Old-fashioned, maybe, but apparently not lacking an escort. (5)
12. Upset by green meat. (9)
13. Could it be Alice? Yes, but it isn't. (5)
15. Players got together by a Northern money ring? (5, 4)
17. In Bridie's play he was sleeping, though not incumbent. (9)
18. Takes all this to make a world. (5)
20. Striking weapon for a disagreeable female. (6-3)
23. Drawn into marriage? (5)
24. Set a fresh booby-trap for the sapper? (7)
25. Encountered after a certain amount of spadework. (7)
26. Hand him your token, or he'll clip you one. (6-9)

DOWN

1. Wandering. (7)
2. Mere trifle, breaking a table leg. (9)
3. In society his lodge is a grove. (5)
4. Colour from cuttlefish, so sanctimonious in salt water. (5)
5. Not sure, albeit the United Nations are quite resolved. (9)
6. Like crumpled gowns, they call for further outlay. (9)
7. The chosen people. (5)
8. Strove to reduce at the Turkish baths. (7)
14. Produced by out-of-this-world bakers? (5, 4)
15. High-sounding, and explosive for a start. (9)
16. Served at meals on the "Flèche d'Or?" (9)
17. In which one sees a slinky creature going about with nothing on. (7)
19. He's not so happy around fifty. Backing too many horses, possibly. (7)
21. Spinner, I see, has something to discuss. (5)
22. Popped animal losing its head is useful to the artist. (5)
23. Bleat about the board. (5)



SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD No. 10

ACROSS: 1, *Alimony.* 5, *Carmine.* 9, *Holocaust.* 10, *Swing.* 11, *Enter.* 12, *Gladiator.* 13, *Enamour.* 15, *Starchy.* 17, *Freedom.* 19, *Beeline.* 21, *Rehearsal.* 23, *Troop.* 24, *April.* 25, *Edelweiss.* 26, *Essayed.* 27, *Turkeys.* *DOWN:* 1, *Athlete.* 2, *Ill at ease.* 3, *Oscar.* 4, *Younger.* 5, *Cutlass.* 6, *Rusticate.* 7, *Idiot.* 8, *Eagerly.* 14, *Old Bailey.* 16, *Crinoline.* 17, *Furnace.* 18, *Mislead.* 19, *Baldest.* 20, *Exposes.* 22, *Hares.* 23, *Tower.*

WINNERS OF CROSSWORD No. 8

Mrs. E. Campbell, 34 Tomonie, Banavie, Fort William, Inverness-shire.

Mrs. J. Tucker, 298 Addington Road, Selsdon, S. Croydon, Surrey.

Mr. H. Deacon, 1 Lancashire Road, Bishopston, Bristol 7.

Readers seeking advice from our team of experts are invited to send their problems to the John Bull Free Advice Service, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. Letters will be answered by post, and problems of general interest will also be published on this page

We advise . . .

FOUR months ago I bought a motor-cycle and since then I have had nothing but trouble. It has been in and out of the dealer's almost every week. It is still under guarantee but only for six months. Is an exchange possible? Or what action can I take?—S. P., Gravesend, Kent.

● If you bought the motor-cycle under a specific trade name, the vendor would have no liability for defects that have appeared. You would have to look to the manufacturers for satisfaction, and they are usually prepared to give it to protect their good name. You should report the matter to them and, if necessary, press for the vehicle to be replaced.

I MUST? YOU MUST

HAVING bought a printing press I wish to supply a few business friends with stationery. I understand this is taxable—must I register for purchase tax?—A. M., Grays, Essex.

● Yes, you must register at the nearest Customs and Excise office.

WHO PAYS?

RECENTLY a sixteen-year-old girl rode her bicycle across a footpath on to the road and caused me to be thrown over the front of my scooter. I broke my jaw in three places, broke my nose, received several cuts which needed stitches and lost some front teeth. I can prove that the accident was in no way my fault. Am I allowed to forward any bills that result from the accident to the girl's parents?—A. B., Kidderminster, Worcs.

● The girl's parents cannot be held liable for the damage caused by the accident. Technically a claim lies against the girl, but unless she has the means to pay, you cannot succeed.

PROTECTION

I HAVE an idea which I think may be of commercial value. What is the best way to handle it so as to protect my interests?—R. E., Gillingham, Kent.

● You can get a provisional patent for your idea from the Patent Office, Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London, W.C.2, for a fee of £1.

PIPE PROBLEM

WHEN I bought an inn three years ago, I built toilets and put in a large, two-chamber septic tank system. Now the council has advised me that I must also pipe the bar sink and kitchen sink wastes into the septic tanks. I have to use a strong, bacteria-killing detergent for washing crockery and glasses, and I am worried whether this will destroy the bacteria in the tanks, thereby making them useless.—J. B., Derbyshire.

● A strong germicidal detergent can destroy bacteria in a septic tank and create complications for the disposal of effluent through the system. It is not always essential for bar and kitchen waste pipes to drain into a system, and it might be better to run them into the filter outlet of your tanks. We suggest you discuss the problem with the local health inspector, but, if you fail to reach agreement, you have the right of appeal to the local magistrates.

Worth Noting

ROGER SMITHELLS keeps practical homelovers up to date

▶ **Vegetable shredder:** Do you find chopping vegetables a bore? You can make a quick job of it with a "Billy" shredder. This is a plastic container into which are fitted cutting blades and a spring-loaded operating handle with a knob. Suitable for all vegetables, fruits, nuts, cheese, etc., the "Billy" retails at 11s. 6d. From most large stores. Distributed by Rudson, Wood & Co., Ltd., 6 Kilburn High Road, London, N.W.6.

▶ **Do-it-yourself flooring:** A new oak-faced parquet flooring, with panels interlocking to form a basket-weave pattern, has just been brought on to the market. The panels are pre-finished and the flooring has the advantage that it can be taken up and relaid when you move house. Panels measure 8⅜ in. square. Sample block and literature can be obtained from the manufacturers on the receipt of 1s. which is refunded on ordering. The manufacturers are J. A. Hewetson and Co., Ltd., Marfleet, Hull.

▶ **New décor for toddlers:** A self-adhesive film depicting the adventures of Sooty, the little bear of TV. fame, has now been added to the Fablon self-adhesive plastic range and sells at 3s. 9d. per yard 18 in. wide. Choose from a background of pink or blue. Suitable for covering nursery furniture, toy boxes, high chairs, etc.

▶ **Cleaning vinyl plastic:** To care for vinyl plastic flooring, it should first be cleaned with a good floor cleaner such as Kleen Floor, then rinsed very thoroughly and allowed to become quite dry. Wax with a hard gloss polish such as Hard Gloss Glo-Coat. To maintain the surface, simply wipe over with a mop wrung out in clean water.

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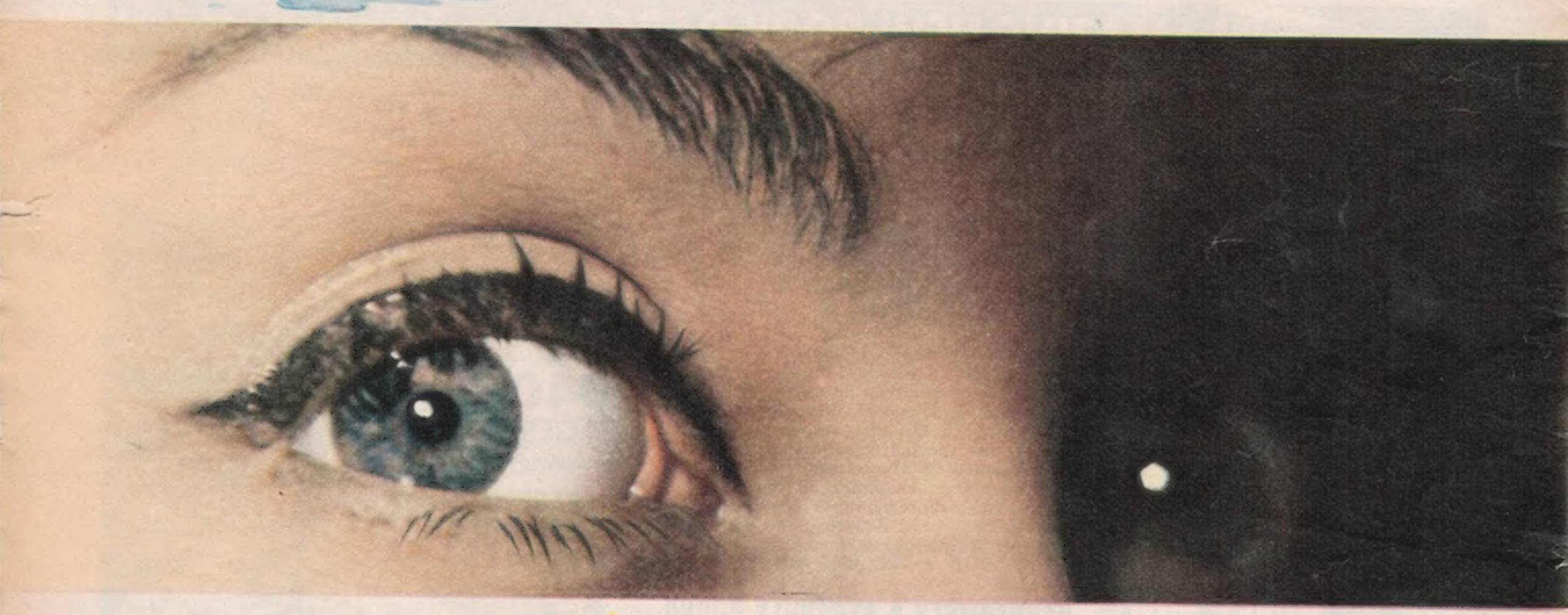
THE *TINGLE IN YOUR MOUTH



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